

Ghali meets Aziz on oil sales

GENEVA (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali met Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz on Sunday to discuss possible partial oil sales by Baghdad, U.N. officials said. A spokesman said the focus of the meeting was to be a U.N. offer allowing the supervised sale by Iraq of \$2 billion worth of oil over six months of buy humanitarian supplies badly needed by ordinary Iraqis. Diplomats said Mr. Aziz was on his way to New York to lobby for the lifting of the tough international economic sanctions imposed on Iraq over its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Both U.N. and independent aid agencies say food and medicines are desperately needed wide areas of the country. They say starvation is taking hold in some areas and hospitals have few medical supplies left. Until now, Iraq has firmly rejected any suggestion of partial sales, saying the terms imposed by the world body would be a violation of the country's sovereignty.

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King sends cable to Saudi leader

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday sent a cable to King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, congratulating him on his full recovery from health ailment and wishing him continued good health and happiness. King Hussein said: "It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I received the good news about our discharge from the hospital after your full recovery from the casual ailment. While praying to the Almighty God for your safety, I sincerely congratulate my dear brother and the royal Saudi family and the Saudi people on your safety."

Barak to visit Cairo — Musa

CAIRO (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Barak will visit Egypt within the next few days for talks on ways to boost the Middle East peace process. Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters on Sunday, Mr. Musa did not give any more information.

21,000 children died in 1995 — Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — More than 21,000 children aged under five died in sanctions-hit Iraq in 1995. Health Minister Umid Mubarak said Sunday, blaming the U.N. embargo on the country since 1990. "The unjust embargo imposed on the Iraqi people led to an increase in the number of deaths of children under the age of five, to reach 21,067 in 1995," he told a news conference. Dr. Mubarak said in 1990 the number of deaths for the same age group was 8,906, and that the number of premature births had risen by 22 per cent this year compared to 1994.

Israeli agents in Cairo to boost security

CAIRO (AFP) — Israel has sent agents from its internal security service Shin Bet to Cairo for the first time to search passengers on El Al flights amid fears of hijack attempts, an Egyptian weekly reported Sunday. The Rose Al Yousef said Israeli security services "fear attempts to hijack Israeli planes by Jewish fanatics to try to secure the release of Yigal Amir," the confessed assassin of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Eight Shin Bet agents were dispatched to Cairo airport to step up checks on both Arab and Jewish passengers using El Al, Israel's national airline, the government weekly said.

Rights Group wants probe into missing Libyan

CAIRO (AFP) — An Arab human rights group called for the authorities to explain the disappearance of Libyan opposition figure Mansour Kikhia who was last seen in the Egyptian capital exactly two years ago on Sunday. Mr. Kikhia, a former foreign minister, has been missing since he took part in a Cairo meeting of the Arab Human Rights Organisation. "The fate of Mansour Kikhia is still unknown despite the promises made to his wife by Egyptian and Libyan officials," the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation said.

Israel allows in more Palestinians

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel formally authorised on Sunday another 9,500 Palestinian workers to enter its territory, a military spokesman said. The decision was announced on Friday by Prime Minister Shimon Peres after a meeting with Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat at the Erez border crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. Of the 9,500 additional workers, 6,800 are residents of the West Bank and another 2,700 come from the Gaza Strip. Lieutenant Peter Lerner said.

Israel speeds up W. Bank pullout

Tulkarm is handed over to Palestinians; first PNA police unit arrives in Hebron

TULKARM (Agencies) — Israeli troops pulled out of Tulkarm on Sunday and the first Palestinian police arrived in Hebron, as the West Bank redeployment picked up speed despite protests and sporadic violence.

Hundreds of Palestinian police took control on Sunday of the northern West Bank town of Tulkarm, bordering Israel, cheered by jubilant residents while their neighbours held angry protests nearby.

A convoy carrying the last Israeli troops pulled off the town of 50,000 overnight under a hail of stones, empty bottles and insults buried by Palestinians rejoicing at the end of 28 years of occupation.

When 350 Palestinian police entered the town in a convoy of buses and jeeps from the self-rule enclave of Jericho, they were greeted with sweets handed out by cheering supporters as others fired in the air in celebration.

Palestinian officials said they expected to be in control of all main towns except Hebron by Dec. 24, one week ahead of schedule.

Syria hopes Peres will remove obstacles to peace in U.S. talks

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria expressed hope on Sunday that Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres would present during talks in Washington new proposals that would remove obstacles blocking its peace negotiations with Syria.

Syria hopes the obstacles which have been blocking the peace process would be removed soon, a Syrian official said.

"It is time for Israel to realise that peace could not move forward if it did not announce its readiness to withdraw fully from every inch of the Golan Heights," the official said.

"Israel should abandon its calls for the establishment of early warning posts in Syrian lands and accept equal and balanced security arrangements," the official added.

Syria has held sporadic peace talks with Israel since 1991 but the negotiations are blocked over the fate of the Golan, future ties and security arrangements.

Both made positive signs for breaking the deadlock after the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish religious student last month.

Mr. Peres, visiting the United States for the first time since becoming premier, said on Sunday he was considering stating publicly for the first time that Israel would be willing to pay for a peace deal with Syria.

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Mr. Peres said he is not going to Washington armed with a weapons shopping list for Israel and had no plans to seek an increase in the \$1.8 billion U.S. military aid programme to his country.

But Israel is trying to gain U.S. authorisation for the export of eight Kfir fighter-bombers to Ecuador in a contract worth \$50 million.

The Israeli Haaretz newspaper said meanwhile Mr.

No word on captive French pilots

SARAJEVO (R) — France's Sunday evening deadline for two downed pilots to be released by the Bosnian Serbs drew near without word of their fate or what Paris intends to do in retaliation.

Russia urged Serb leaders to say what had happened to the French airmen and the pilots' families called on Paris to postpone this week's planned signing of the Dayton peace deal.

As the deadline approached, there was no word on the whereabouts of the two pilots shot down during NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in August, or even whether they were still alive.

France has threatened "multiple consequences" and possible "strikes" against the pilots' captors and their political leaders if the deadline is not met, but has not spelt out

"The redeployment process has been speeded up to help finish implementation of the agreement as soon as possible and to build enough trust and confidence between both parties," senior Palestinian negotiator Ahmad Qureia told Reuters.

Since Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination last month Israel has quickened the pace of troop redeployment, and voter registration for Palestinian elections due on Jan. 20 has picked up.

The withdrawal and elections are major planks in the agreement Mr. Rabin signed with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat to extend self-rule from Gaza and Jericho to the whole West Bank.

In Hebron, however, protesting Jewish settlers almost matched the number of Palestinian officials who greeted the first 13 PLO policemen. The police are to set up a district coordination office, a prelude to a partial Israeli pullout from Hebron.

The army is to leave Nablus, the biggest West Bank town, on Dec. 14, Bethlehem on Dec. 18, and Ramallah on Dec. 24, PLO officials said.

He earlier addressed Tulkarm inhabitants by telephone, his voice amplified by megaphones, saying: "We are going to carry on ... until

Speaking to reporters aboard his Israeli air force flight to the United States, Mr. Peres said he might declare that price — a reference to a future Israeli withdrawal from the Golan — is in a statement in the Israeli parliament.

Israel's armed forces chief General Amnon Shabak stressed on Sunday the strategic war-time value of the Golan Heights.

"It's undeniable that in case of war the Golan has a very high strategic value," the chief-of-staff told schoolchildren in the northern town of Haifa. "No amount of sophisticated equipment, no electronic system can replace it."

Mr. Peres' visit to the U.S. would be followed by a shuttle mission to Syria and Israel by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in mid-December.

The Syrian official said Damascus was still calling for "full peace in return for full withdrawal" and that peace remained Syria's strategic option.

This means that the ball is still in Israel's court. Syria did all that is required from her to push the ranks forward and it is now Israel's turn to speak about full withdrawal," the official said.

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U.S. satellite sales to Arabs

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Two airmen urged French government to put off Thursday's planned signing of the Bosnia peace deal

Two airmen urged the French government to put off Thursday's planned signing of the Bosnia peace deal agreed last month in Dayton, Ohio, if the pilots were not returned.

I think the Serb leaders have sufficient reasons to communicate the fate of the pilots," Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev was quoted as saying in London by ITAR-TASS news agency.

If they are alive, then I would strongly recommend urgently returning them to the French," Mr. Kozyrev was also quoted as calling for the suspension of moves by the Hague international tribunal to put Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and army commander General Ratko Mladic on trial for war crimes.

The 46-member advance team included Italian carabinieri para-military police, some 20 U.S. marines and U.S. Army and Air Force security police. They left on a military C-130 transport plane.

In Paris, the families of the

What these might be.

Russia, a traditional ally of the Serbs, said Serb leaders had good reasons to reveal the fate of the pilots and called for their release if they were still alive.

Although the stand-off cast a shadow over the peace deal, preparations for deploying a 60,000-strong NATO force to implement the Dayton accord were gathering pace.

A first group of soldiers and policemen who will protect the headquarters of the force left for Sarajevo on Sunday.

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King Hussein presents State Awards

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday presented the 1995 State Awards for distinguished Jordanian intellectuals, writers and artists whose work contributed substantially to progress in the field of social science, literature, abstract art and theatre production.

At the presentation ceremony, held at the Royal Cultural Centre, Minister of Culture Samir Habashneh paid tribute to King Hussein's leadership and continuous support of Jordan's cultural renaissance, which, he said, will lead to development and better quality of life.

"Jordan's democracy guarantees the political, civil and human rights of its citizens," Mr. Habashneh said.

He stressed that the "special national fabric of Jordan" (Continued on page 7)

His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem and Culture Minister Samir Habashneh attend a ceremony on Sunday where the King presented this year's State Awards (photo by Yousef Allan)

Sharif Zeid: Government concern is to safeguard 'responsible' press

Aim of tightening press law is to deter attacks against Jordan's image and values at home, premier tells editors

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker yesterday rejected accusations that his government was intent on lowering the ceiling of press freedom in the country, stressing that "responsible" journalists had nothing to fear from amendments to the Press and Publications Law that are under discussion.

The prime minister reminded the editors of earlier statements he made regarding the press, specifically of the pledge to introduce any amendments only through the constitutional process — starting with drawing up proposals by the Ministry of

which do harm to both Jordan's image abroad and to Jordanian values at home.

The mainstream press need not worry new restrictions being imposed on their freedom to report and comment on various issues, he said. What have to stop are excesses (in the tabloids) which the state, and its people, can neither afford nor tolerate.

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In a meeting he held with editors-in-chief of daily newspapers at his office, the prime minister said the objective of the expected amendments was to deter newspapers, mainly weekly tabloids,

Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Information in consultation with legal experts, then approving the draft proposals

by the Cabinet before submitting the whole legislative package to Parliament for consideration and passage.

This is the due process of the law, the prime minister stressed, which could ensure both fairness and democratic practice. He added: The government is not out to muzzle journalists: on the contrary, it fully understands, even appreciates, critical articles that are written in good faith and for the benefit of the state.

Sharif Zeid complained that attacks in the press generally against the government (for initiating the

(Continued on page 7)

Security reason behind expulsion of Iranian diplomat, Kabariti says

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

SOCIETY REASON was behind Jordan's decision to expel an Iranian diplomat and the Kingdom does not think that its relations with Iran would be damaged by the expulsion, which was countered by Tehran by ordering out a Jordanian diplomat, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Sunday.

Mr. Kabariti, who is on a visit to Doha, Qatar, was also quoted as saying that Jordan is considering hosting a meeting of Iraqi opposition to debate the future of Iraq, but the Kingdom is committed to safeguarding the unity of its eastern neighbour.

Mr. Kabariti was quoted as saying by Agence France Presse (AFP) that Jordan was

not recommending a federal Iraq but said "federalism is one solution among others" for the future of the country.

Jordan has two goals: to end the suffering of the Iraqi people and preserve the country's unity," he told AFP.

He said there could be a meeting in Amman of representatives of the Iraqi opposition factions from abroad and from within (the country) which would try to reach an agreement on these two goals and find a way of allowing the Iraqi people to decide on the constitutional future of Iraq.

"We have no ready solution in Jordan," Mr. Kabariti added, stressing there was no "Jordaniyan plot to divide Iraq."

Mr. Kabariti was received by Qatar's emir, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani.

King receives Iranian message HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Sunday received a message from Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani dealing with "bilateral relations and means of enhancing them for the benefit of the people in both countries."

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the message was delivered to King Hussein by Iranian ambassador to Jordan Ahmad Dasmanchi during an audience at the Royal Court. The audience was attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem.

Mr. Kabariti conveyed to Sheikh Hamad the greetings

(Continued on page 2)

Shbeihat detained for 2 weeks; charges are not yet finalised

By Sa'eda Kitari

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The outspoken president of the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA), Leith Shbeihat, who was arrested Saturday on charges of slandering His Majesty King Hussein, was ordered held for 15 days without bail, Attorney General Mahmoud Obeidat said Sunday.

He said he was to go to parliament on Sunday night and invoke article 49.3 of the constitution turning the bill into a confidence issue. Unless a no-confidence motion passes within 24 hours, the bill is automatically passed.

In another conciliatory gesture, Mr. Juppé said he was suspending a special commission on public sector pensions with which the unions had refused to cooperate.

Unions have demanded the state contract be rewritten from scratch. They also sought promises that the retirement age

Home & Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1995

German probe against Iranian minister is on

KARLSRUHE (AFP) — German federal prosecutors have launched a murder probe against the head of Iranian intelligence, a spokesman said here Sunday, the first time a Western country has directly challenged such a senior Iranian official over terrorism.

Prosecution spokesman Rolf Hannich said the investigation concerned Iranian Security Minister Ali Fallahian's alleged role in the September 1992 murder of four Iranian Kurdish opposition militants.

Mr. Fallahian is suspected of having ordered the killings at a Berlin restaurant named Nykonos. One of those killed was Iranian Kurdish opposition leader Sadegh Sharaf-kandi.

Mr. Hannich told AFP the investigation had been opened "in the past few days" but he refused to be more specific.

A trial of five men — four Lebanese and an Iranian — began in October 1993 in Berlin in connection with the restaurant killings and is still going on. The case drawn up by federal prosecutors specifically names Iranian intelligence.

Mr. Hannich's statement confirmed a report in Monday's edition of the German news magazine Focus, made public Saturday, which revealed federal prosecutors were opening the inquiry.

It is the federal prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe, southwest Germany, which is

responsible for investigations into alleged terrorism.

Germany, which says it has a policy of "critical dialogue" with Tehran, is Iran's biggest trading partner, and has welcomed Mr. Fallahian and Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati in the past two years.

In 1993, Mr. Fallahian was received in Germany by Bernd Schmidauer, secretary of state and head of the German intelligence services, at a meeting condemned by the United States, Israel and particularly Britain.

Britain is campaigning for Iran to abandon its religious decree condemning British writer Salman Rushdie to death for alleged blasphemy in his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

However, the lower house of the German parliament forced the government last month to postpone a two-day conference on Islam, organized by Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, because Mr. Velayati was due to take part.

Deputies said their decision was justified by Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani's comments that the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was the "vengeance of God."

Tehran had not reacted earlier to the decision to postpone the conference for fear of alienating Bonn, its major ally in Europe, Mr. Kinkel later defended his Iranian policy as justified.

Islam minister got food for supporters — GPS

SANA (Agencies) — Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh's ruling party on Sunday accused a resigning Islamic fundamentalist minister of having used his position to supply food to his party's supporters.

A General People's Congress (GPC) official said Supply and Trade Minister Mohammad Al Afandi and his deputy Abdul Majid Al Mekhlafi, both from the fundamentalist Al Islah party, had formed an unofficial and partisan body to "distribute food rations."

The issue would be taken up in cabinet meetings, he told the official SABA news agency.

The two banded in their notice on Saturday saying they had been "stripped of their prerogatives and are no longer in a position to fulfil their responsibilities" in the ministry, a member of Al Islah said.

He did not say whether their resignations had been accepted.

A public row broke out in August between the GPC and Al Islah over the running of the Supply and Trade Ministry.

The GPC accused Mr. Afandi of using his post to profit his party, and employing Al Islah militants instead of government workers to distribute rations of wheat and flour to the public.

Al Islah Secretary General Mohammad Yadum said Saturday the minister used party militants "to ease the plight of the population and send flour and wheat rations to all parts of the country."

In their letters, Mr. Afandi and his deputy said they were no longer in a position to "supervise the distribution of

basic foodstuffs in line with ministry rules."

They also accused unnamed "parties and influential people" of "interference hindering the running of the ministry."

Sources close to Al Islah said the party's leaders and their GPC counterparts were in contact to try "to avoid a crisis between the two members of the coalition."

Relations between Al Islah, which has nine cabinet posts, and the GPC, which heads 15 ministries, have worsened in the last few months. The two have clashed over economic reforms begun under the auspices of the World Bank.

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Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday meets with Higher Investment Council members to discuss investment facilitation (Petra photo)

Prime minister calls for private sector participation in investment incentives

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday said the government was looking forward to the Jordanian private sector's participation in formulating ideas and proposals that can serve as incentives for investors in the Kingdom.

In the first meeting of the Higher Investments Council (HIC), which convened under his chairmanship, the prime minister called on the council to put all efforts in facilitating investments in the peace-building era.

He said the council should speed up the drawing up of regulations for investments to be incorporated in the new investment promotion law.

The prime minister said investments should be

encouraged first in the remote and less fortunate regions of the country.

Suggestions floated during the meeting included creating a system whereby the Kingdom will be divided into three categories organising tax exemptions for the various economic sectors in accordance with development zones.

The prime minister reviewed with council members the general aspects of the new draft on investments promotion law. The members gave their consent to the formation of a board to supervise the work of the investment promotion institution to be chaired by Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abu Ragheb and which would include the ministers of

finance, tourism, and the institution's director general Taleb Rifai, as well as Haidar Murad, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, Khaldoun Abu Hassan, president of the Amman Chamber of Industry and Raja'i Muasher, Board chairman of the Business Bank.

Mr. Abu Ragheb told the Jordan Times that discussions were positive.

The HIC will play a key role in facilitating investments and in the operations of the investment promotion institution, the minister said.

He said the council is also adopting a national strategy for facilitating investments which will direct investments towards specific

Doctor performs 'first' ankle arthroscopic operation in Kingdom

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In what he claims to be the first operation of its kind in the Kingdom, Dr. Bashar Hamarneh, an orthopaedic surgeon, performed, at the beginning of December, an arthroscopy of the ankle joint.

A delicate operation that involves only two small incisions instead of a whole cut through layers covering the bones, the arthroscopy is done with the help of an arthroscope (a tube with a system of mirrors inside, connected to a TV set) and, according to the joint, a set of other tools, among which a punch (that punctures and cuts away), scissors, a rotating knife, an alligator grasper.

The patient Dr. Hamarneh operated on was a 25-year-old man who had had a fracture in the leg and had been treated conservatively, with plaster of Paris, but who still had problems when the cast was removed.

X-ray and CT scanning showed loose bodies, usually made up of bone and cartilage.

To make sure where the bodies were, as there were



Dr. Bashar Hamarneh

three possibilities—in the joint, outside it or in the capsule (the membrane covering the joint)—computer tomography was performed.

The operation then lasted around one hour and was practically done on television. After such an operation, which is performed under general anaesthesia, the patient needs physiotherapy and in about 10 days the stitches can be removed, Dr. Hamarneh explained.

Arthroscopy, said Dr. Hamarneh, was pioneered in Jordan by Dr. Hannah

Qawar over 10 years ago. It started on the knee, which is a bigger joint and therefore more prone to having problems. One year ago, arthroscopy started being performed on the shoulder, another big joint.

According to Dr. Hamarneh though, this kind of operation has not been performed yet on other joints like elbow, hand, hip, ankle and disk.

He attributes this partly to the fact that these, being smaller joints, are less apt to have problems and partly to lack of practice and exposure to this sort of operations, which perhaps makes doctors reluctant to start performing them.

One advantage of arthroscopy, said Dr. Hamarneh, is that, as the incisions are smaller, the pain is less, the movement of the joint is better than after open surgery and rehabilitation is faster, which enables the patient to resume work or normal life faster.

Another advantage is that, as the doctor can see everything inside the joint, the operation is easier and neater and more problems can be treated than in the case of open surgery.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Uranus" at the French Cultural Centre at 8.00 p.m.

LECTURES

* "Orwell's Animal Farm" by Dr. Nicholas Linfield at the British Council at 5.00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by artist Hind Nasser at Darat Al Funun (until Jan. 6). * Bawadi's "Season Of Joy" exhibition, a collection of rugs and ceramics, at the National Ceramics Centre, Khalda, from 9.00 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. Tel. 825241, 834688.

(Until Dec. 12)
* Photography by poet Ibrahim Nasrallah entitled "The Autobiography of an Eye" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh. (Until Jan. 4).
* Photography exhibition "Biblical Itineraries" at the French Cultural Centre. (Until Dec. 30).

CHRISTMAS SALE

* Gifts and crafts by Suha Lallas Kassisieh (includes Christmas items, table mats, baskets, wall-hangings, candle-holders and side-lamps) at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqa Street (until Dec. 31).

Hashemite University to introduce new specialisations to meet job market needs

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — The new state-owned Hashemite University in Zarqa, which opened its doors to students last September is going to help alleviate pressure on the overcrowded University of Jordan, and introduce new majors and academic specialisations to meet the needs of the current job market, according to Mohammed Hamdan, president of the Hashemite Uni-

versity of higher education, new colleges of health sciences, engineering, and agriculture will be opened in the future, when the second and last stage of construction will be completed.

Dr. Hamdan underlined the importance of the geographic location of the new university, and pointed out that Zarqa governorate, with over 600,000 inhabitants, represents the second largest population centre in the Kingdom, with all the social and environmental problems consequential to an uncontrolled population growth.

According to Dr. Hamdan, the new university will help identify the problems of the Zarqa local community through field studies and surveys, finding suitable solutions and proposing new strategies of fundraising to enforce solutions.

Dr. Hamdan also stressed that before Sept. 1995, when the Hashemite University opened, the University of Jordan was the only public institution for higher education in central Jordan.

"The current infrastructure at the University of Jordan, in terms of classes, labs, libraries and student services, was designed to provide quality education for not more than 15,000

students, while this year's enrolment number is 24,000," Mohammed Maqousi, vice-president for academic affairs at the University of Jordan, said.

According to statistics published by the Ministry of Higher Education last June, around 76,000 students sat for their Tawjih exams in 1995, and out of more than 25,000 applicants, the Kingdom's state-owned universities could only absorb 8,219 students.

Rather than opening new universities the problem could be solved by "reshaping" higher education through the promotion of one-year vocational and technical training to create semi-skilled labour," according to Dr. Maqousi.

Ahmad Husban, secretary general at the Ministry of Higher Education, said "the establishment of the Hashemite University will hopefully relieve pressure on the University of Jordan," and added that at the University of Jordan this year, the minimum Tawjih grade required for enrolment had to be raised to 84%.

Though the core programmes will be the same as those of the University of Jordan, the Hashemite University is designed to cover areas not available at other universities and to introduce interdisciplinary studies in the curricula. Dr. Hamdan said new disciplines, such as environmental health, biotechnology, tourism, hotel management and hospital management, will be introduced in the attempt to promote programmes which fulfil the needs of the actual job market.

The Hashemite University is the fifth public university in the Kingdom. The University of Jordan was established in 1962, followed by Yarmouk University in 1976, Mu'ta University in 1981, and the more recent Jordan University for Science and Technology established in 1986. Al al-Bayt University, instead, is an international Islamic university.

Public universities are financed through annual government allocations in the state's budget, university taxes and donations.

According to Dr. Hamdan, fees, which are uniform for Jordanian public universities, and vary from one discipline to another, range from JD 350, for faculties of social sciences and humanities, up to JD 900, for scientific faculties such as pharmacy or medical sciences. They cover 25% of the university's running costs.

Transport company to operate to and from self-rule areas

By Ghalia Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A transport shareholding company consisting of 19 founding private sector partners is expected to start carrying passengers to and from Israel in three months, a source at one of the founding companies said Sunday.

Marwan Bitar, a shareholder at Petra Navigation said that 724 companies had applied to the Ministry of Interior to establish a transport company to carry people to the areas of the Palestine National Authority, and an additional 88 companies had applied to carry passengers to Israel.

But, he said, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Transport have decided to integrate all the applicants as shareholders, and 19 private sector companies as owners to form one company carrying passengers to and from Israel.

As for passengers going to the Palestinian self rule areas, Mr. Bitar said the company will carry them to the crossing point at King Hussein Bridge, where they will take buses owned by a newly established Palestinian company.

"In the preliminary stage, we will carry passengers going to the self-rule areas to the terminal near the

Palestinian self-rule areas," he said.

The company will be established with a JD 10 million capital, and the 19 founding private sector companies will have 25 per cent equity in the capital.

Mr. Bitar told the Jordan Times that the establishing committee, which consists of five founding members, will meet on Tuesday to discuss procedures for the registration of the company. The committee will also choose the company which will conduct the feasibility study.

Indications are that the project will be feasible even before the feasibility study is conducted, he said.

He added that upon completion of the study and the establishment of the company, the committee will start offering shares to the public.

It is not expected that the company will commence work, however, before Jordan and Israel sign the transport agreement which is to be concluded between the two countries under their Oct. 26 1994 peace treaty.

The transport agreement has been finalised, but no specific date for signing it has yet been set.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mayor receives Qatari invitation

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi Sunday received an invitation from the Qatari Minister of Municipal and Agricultural Affairs to visit Doha for talks on means of enhancing bilateral cooperation, and exchange of expertise and experiences. The invitation was delivered to Deputy Amman Mayor Falah Omoush during a meeting with the under-secretary of the Qatari Ministry of Municipal and Agricultural Affairs, Ali Ben Said Al Kawari.

Damen-Masri to attend Cairo meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Salwa Damen-Masri Sunday left for Cairo to take part in the 28th session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs' Executive Bureau, which will start here today. The ministers will discuss over two days such issues as the technical secretariat's report on women and families' affairs, and settlement of Arab countries' financial obligations to the Arab Fund for Social Development. The bureau will also endorse the fund's 1996 estimated budget and technical assistance for social projects in the Arab World.

No injuries as fire breaks out in Ramtha university dorms

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 140 students were evacuated from a women's dormitory in Ramtha when a fire broke out in the laundry room located in the basement of the building, Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials said.

A CDD official told the Jordan Times Sunday that the fire, which started at 5:17 p.m. in the B1 Dormitory of the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), was caused by an electrical failure in one of the washing machines, setting off a fire which spread to the rest of the area.

"We were able to control the blaze in less than 10 minutes and prevented it from spreading to the four-

storey building," the official said.

He added that 143 students were evacuated from the B1 Dormitory until the rescue operations ended. There were no injuries reported, said the official.

The official said evacuation was prompt because the CDD had conducted frequent fire drills in the buildings.

Meanwhile, three people including two children were killed Sunday in three separate accidents, police and CDD reports said.

In south Marka, a 60-year-old man died when a lit kerosene heater fell over him, CDD reports said.

A CDD official said that preliminary investigations indicated that the victim, Hamdan Mustafa Nasralah, who was alone during the incident "probably was

attempting to switch off the heater when it fell."

According to the official, the fire destroyed the house.

Also Sunday, a four-year-old child was killed in Zarqa after being run over by a bus, according to police reports.

Hamzeh A. was crossing the street when he was struck by a bus driven by Maher Arif, 23, the report said. The child was killed instantly, it added.

In Irbid, an eight-year-old child drowned after falling in a water well in her yard, police reports said.

A police official told the Jordan Times Sunday that Lamia Issa was playing alone near the water well when she fell.

He said that the child was discovered by her parents hours later.

Jordan hopes to secure 3.3 m tonnes of oil from Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is currently holding negotiations with Iraq to secure the country's needs of crude oil and oil products for next year, according to Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazeh Sunday.

He told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that an official Jordanian delegation will leave for Baghdad in the first half of December to negotiate Jordan's oil needs which are expected to be around 3.3 million tonnes of crude oil.

The minister also announced that Jordan will be buying 120,000 tonnes of liquefied gas, 300,000 tonnes of diesel oil and nearly 800,000 tonnes of fuel oil to increase the amounts of oil products

Kuwait.

According to Mr. Darwazeh the Jordanian government has presented a request to Saudi Arabia to buy gas to be used in the electric power generation process and to supply Jordanian factories.

The amount of imported oil from Iraq in the coming year will be higher than the amounts imported in 1995 because of rising domestic consumption, according to the minister.

Iraq is Jordan's only source of oil supplying the Kingdom with 70,000 barrels of crude per day. Baghdad cannot sell its oil elsewhere under UN sanctions imposed after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

JES organises workshop on floods

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Environment Society (JES) Sunday organised a one-day workshop on floods and their adverse effects on the environment and ways to avoid human and material losses.

The main speaker at the workshop was Colonel Mahmoud Abbadi from the Civil Defence Department (CDD) who called on various concerned organisations in Jordan to cooperate closely with the CDD in taking precautionary measures and plans to deal with the danger of floods and their consequences.

The CDD has established a special division in 1990 to deal with disasters and was charged with providing guidance and advice to the public in case of floods and other natural disasters, Col. Abbadi said.

Col. Abbadi said floods which have occurred in the Kingdom in the past few decades have not been rated as disasters but that there was a need to point out potential threats.

The meeting was organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the CDD and was attended by representatives of various public and private organisations.

N. Korea warns South over army alert

TOKYO (Agencies) — North Korea said Sunday South Korea's decision to put its armed forces on alert was a "provocation" and indicated it also was stepping up military "vigilance."

A commentary in the North Korean military newspaper Rodong Sinmun said South Korea's action was a bid to divert attention from a domestic crisis set off by disclosures about slush funds allegedly amassed by two former South Korean presidents.

The commentary, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored in Tokyo, said:

"Threat from the North and threat of southward invasion are stereotyped pretexts the South Korean puppets use to mislead public opinion at home and abroad each time they face a serious government crisis."

Last Thursday the South Korean Defence Ministry said it was increasing military preparedness on the border until the end of April.

"It is judged that North Korea, whose system is in danger of collapse, might miscalculate the situation and commit military provocations," a ministry statement said.

South Korea has also

become increasingly edgy over reports of a food crisis in the North causing malnutrition in some areas during a bitterly cold winter.

The two Koreas are still technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean War. In the past several months there have been two armed incursions from the North that have created full-scale security alerts in the South.

Rodong Sinmun said South Korea's action was a "downright challenge and provocation against North Korea."

It said South Korean President Kim Young-Sam and his followers were in "serious crisis" over the slush fund scandal and thought they could get rid of the issue by "shocking false propaganda" about a threat from North Korea.

"This futile attempt will only precipitate their disgraceful end. We are sharpening vigilance over the reckless military moves of the bellicose Kim Young-Sam group, who are driven into a tight corner," the commentary said.

"We warn them again to stop acting like a newborn puppy knowing no fear of a tiger."

Meanwhile famine and an acute economic crisis in North Korea are evoking unease in South Korea and Japan, where it is hoped the

Pyongyang regime will not be tempted to use military adventure to divert attention from its problems.

Japanese experts on North Korea are, however, more reassuring.

In Tokyo, the new Japanese Ambassador to the United States, Kunihiko Saito, said Friday that despite an economic crisis and a serious food shortage North Korea "remains an important military power."

"We cannot say that the threat posed by this country on neighbouring countries has diminished just because it is in a difficult economic situation," said Mr. Saito, a former vice foreign minister.

Some military experts believe that if North Korea launched a quick and massive offensive against the South, many weeks of fierce combat, during which tens of thousands of people would die, would be required before American and South Korean forces prevailed.

A South Korean military report showed last week that North Koreans had stationed 85 IL-28 bombers and MiG-17 and MiG-19 jet fighter planes at a rarely used air base located about 40 kilometres from the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas.

But Japanese experts on

North Korea are less alarmist, pointing out that Pyongyang is using the catastrophic floods that inundated huge areas of cultivated land last summer to extract political gains and economic aid from its old capitalist enemies.

World Food Programme representative in North Korea, Trevor Page, revealed Tuesday that wide-scale signs of famine were visible across North Korea: "they are everywhere," he said.

But observers of North Korea say the famine does not translate into imminent revolution in a country almost completely isolated from the outside world.

"The probability of a provocative act by North Korea is low," said Naruhiko Michishita, associate researcher at the Japanese National Institute For Defence Studies.

"North Korea would rather continue to keep a civil attitude while the Pyongyang regime is engaged in talks with the United States and wishes to normalize relations with Japan," he said.

North Korea has already given signs of a new openness by asking — for the first time in its history — for international aid after the floods, the experts say. And it is permitting United

Nations missions and Western humanitarian organisations to go to parts of the country normally closed to foreigners.

Even if Kim Jong-Il has not yet officially seized the reigns of power 17 months after the death of his father Kim Il-Sung, he is still the country's uncontested master with no sign of any organised opposition, the specialists say.

Aid from the former Soviet Union and its satellite states dried up after the Soviet collapse. But in a deal to freeze its nuclear programme, North Korea is receiving 500,000 tonnes of heavy oil annually from a U.S.-led consortium until North Korea's outmoded graphite-moderated reactors, which produce weapons-grade plutonium, can be replaced by light-water reactors supplied by the consortium.

Another sign of appeasement came from Japan Friday with the announcement that a senior official from the Federation Of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) had visited Pyongyang and other Korean cities from Nov. 7 to 11, the powerful business group's first talks with North Korean officials.



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev casts his vote in the central district polling station of Almaty (AFP photo)

Kazakh polls fail to return quorum to lower house

ALMATY (R) — Voting for members of Kazakhstan's new lower house of parliament filled 43 of the 67 seats, but a second-round of balloting must be held to obtain the two-thirds needed for a quorum, electoral officials said Sunday.

Election Commission Chairman Yuri Kim reported a 78 per cent turnout Saturday among the former Soviet republic's 8.9 million voters. The 50 per cent turnout needed to make the poll valid was achieved in all constituencies.

According to preliminary figures, runoffs will be needed in 23 seats and counting is continuing in one district. No details of the party affiliations of voters were published.

"We don't have a quorum, therefore the first session of parliament will be held after the election of the required number of deputies," Mr. Kim said.

Election observers and opposition parties said they saw violations such as multiple voting and collection of votes from absentees. They added that they were barred from scrutinising the count in some polling centres.

Mr. Kim conceded that multiple voting was prevalent, but despite attempts to stamp out the Soviet-era practice, inertia among voters and local officials meant it had continued.

Opposition parties sharply criticised rules they said hampered their election chances, voters were apathetic and observers said violations committed in 1994 elections later declared illegal had been repeated.

"One person, one vote was a principle the government agreed to abide by in numerous international agreements — but multiple voting was widespread," one foreign observer said.

"They had to reach 50 per cent, and without relying on this I doubt 50 per cent would have been reached," the observer added.

Experts seek Ebola victim's route to Ivory Coast

GOZON, Ivory Coast (R) — Officials and experts hunting for new cases of Ebola near Ivory Coast's border with war-shattered Liberia are trying to trace the movements of a refugee infected by the deadly virus, security sources say.

They said home-made bombs exploded as opposition activists and police chased one another in what looked like a hit-and-run battle. Some protesters were injured, one Chittagong reporter said.

At the centre of the dispute between the government and the main opposition Awami League and its allies is a general election which has been called for Jan. 18.

The opposition wants Mrs. Khaleda to resign first so the vote can be held under a neutral caretaker administration. It alleges that otherwise the polls cannot be free and fair.

Stamp, singing mark 15th anniversary of Lennon's death

NEW YORK (R) — Fans of John Lennon marked the 15th anniversary of the former Beatle's death by visiting his memorial garden in Central Park and gazing silently at the apartment entrance where he was murdered. Eight countries issued stamps to commemorate the anniversary. Throughout the cold, sunny day a crowd with changing faces but with a constant count of about 50 surrounded the Imagine stone memorial in the park and covered it with flowers, apples, candles, cards and other offerings. Lennon was shot and killed at the Dakota Apartment House across the street from the park by Mark David Chapman, a disgruntled fan, on Dec. 8, 1980. Lennon stamps that were issued in eight countries were unveiled. Lennon's wife, Yoko Ono, selected the paintings and digitalised photos of Lennon at different stages of his life, said a spokesman for the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation. She encouraged the use of Lennon's self-portrait, which was used on stamps from Azerbaijan and Mali. Previously no more than three countries have ever issued related commemorative stamps at the same time. The other countries were Antigua/Barbuda, Nicaragua, Guyana, Maldives, Palau and Ghana.

Vietnam targets foreign cultural influences

HANOI (R) — Vietnam, concerned over negative foreign influences, has stopped issuing licences to karaoke bars and discos in Ho Chi Minh City, a local newspaper reported. The daily Saigon Giai Phong newspaper said the decision, made earlier this week, was part of what it described as "a major campaign to crack down on illegal cultural products" ahead of the Tet Lunar New Year Festival in February. Items targeted by the campaign in the southern city included video and cassette tapes, signs outside bars and discos and other products which could influence Vietnamese culture in a negative way, the newspaper said.

The Party of National Unity, registered this year and based on a social movement founded two years ago by President Nursultan Nazarbayev, put up the most candidates and said it was happy with the polls.

Parliament was dissolved in March after the 1994 elections were annulled.

Mr. Nazarbayev has since held two referendums, one to extend his term to 2000 and a second to pass a new constitution.

Under the new basic law the two-chamber parliament cannot initiate laws and may be dissolved if it passes a vote of no confidence in the government. It cannot impeach the president.

Mr. Nazarbayev said the new house would have to cooperate with the government.

"If there is no consensus, there are other ways to resolve this constitutional conflict," he told reporters.

Furious MPs call for ban on Boy George record

LONDON (AFP) — British pop singer Boy George sparked outrage here with plans to release a song about the drug "ecstasy" with MP's calling for Home Secretary Michael Howard to ban the record. The former heroin addict's record company is pressing ahead with re-releasing the 1989 song despite renewed uproar here over use of the "rave" drug after a teenager, Leah Bets, died after taking an ecstasy tablet at a party to celebrate her 18th birthday. Earlier Friday, police charged a 17-year-old with supplying Bets with the drug.

"Everything starts with an E" — by the Eze Posse on Boy George's More Protein Record label — was condemned as "sad and sick" by tory MPs. But Boy George's spokesman defended it, claiming although the song was clearly about ecstasy, it did not condone its use. He added that Boy George had spoken publicly of the hazards of drug-taking after he had successfully combatted his own addiction.

Japan reactor leaked up to 3 tonnes of sodium

TOKYO (R) — Company officials said Sunday up to three tons of sodium leaked from a cooling system at Japan's most-advanced nuclear reactor in an accident critics say has cast a cloud over the country's ambitious nuclear power programme.

The fast-breeder reactor, Monju, was shut down manually Friday after the liquid sodium leak and was unlikely to resume operation for at least three months.

Monju's operators, the government's Power Reactor And Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation (PNC), said there was never any danger of radioactivity from the leak in the reactor's cooling system.

PNC officials said engineers wearing protective clothing and oxygen masks had been in the affected area

and believed the leak, now stopped, was from piping repaired in 1992.

The accident set off demands for a review or end closure of Monju.

"This accident is the final alarm before a massive radiation disaster," centre head Jinzaburo Takagi said in a statement Saturday. "We demand that the government freeze its plutonium programme and immediately begin a total revision of policy."

Fukui Governor Yukio Kunita said Saturday PNC waited nearly one hour after the shutdown before contacting him.

"Along with the delay in the advisory bulletin, subsequent reports were insufficient," the governor said in a statement. "This is an extremely regrettable loss of the prefecture's trust in the

overall safety of Monju."

But Masaaki Nishida, Monju's chief construction engineer, told reporters it would take at least three months to identify the exact cause of the leak and repair it.

Japan launched the project in 1985 to build the "dream" reactor, one that produced more nuclear fuel than it consumed.

An official of the environmental group Greenpeace told Reuters the sodium coolant leak — a technical fault common in fast-breeder programmes — could prove politically fatal to Monju.

"Even if there has been no radiation leak, the political embarrassment is so great that it could spell the end of the Monju programme," said Greenpeace Japan Director John Willis.

Rwandans fear fresh slaughter if U.N. troops leave

KIGALI (R) — As the Tutsi army soldiers walked by, the Rwandan traders in Kigali's hustling market fell silent.

"People are afraid," Huu Pierre Hategikama whispered.

"People say Tutsis don't want the world to witness massacres of Hutus."

If the foreigners leave our country, the army will feel free to kill the Hutus."

Before the footsteps of the soldier silenced them, the traders had been discussing the possible pullout of the United Nations' 1,800 troops from Rwanda — an animated conversation that illustrated one view of ordinary Rwandans on the presence of the foreign troops.

The government wants to get rid of the U.N. troops, saying they are not needed to provide security, which it says is the job of the army.

For many of Rwanda's Hutu people, however, it is the army that poses the greatest threat to their security.

Jeanne Mukabera, a young woman selling sweet bananas and juicy mangoes on a nearby market stall, chimed in: "White people and U.N. soldiers provide

replaced by a strictly non-military contingent of 800 engineers and technicians with a new three-month mandate to bring home 1.7 million Hutu refugees in Zaire and Tanzania to return.

But there is resentment at the U.N. troops among many of the Tutsi survivors of the 1994 genocide of up to one million of their people and allied moderate Hutus by hardline Hutu militia and soldiers.

The Tutsis, living with the trauma of seeing their wives and children hacked to pieces, of relatives having vanished, and of months of discoveries of mass graves, blame the U.N. troops for failing either to prevent or end the killings.

"What do U.N. soldiers do when our people are being killed by the thousands? They went back home, they didn't even take our children in their cars and planes," said Christine Uwera, a Tutsi woman nursing a baby outside her home in Kigali.

The Security Council and Rwanda failed in New York Friday to agree on a new mandate for the peacekeeping force and postponed a decision for four days on its size and composition.

Rwanda has demanded that all 1,800 troops be

replaced by a strictly non-military contingent of 800 engineers and technicians with a new three-month mandate to bring home 1.7 million Hutu refugees in Zaire and Tanzania to return.

women, according to various sources, demonstrated Saturday in Kigali for peace and against violence.

One of those taking part said they included the wives of President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo, former President Pierre Buyoya and assassinated President Melchior Ndaye.

Witnesses said hundreds of Hutu extremists were involved in fighting. Police said they had come from Zaire, where tens of thousands of Burundian Hutus had escaped ethnic unrest.

Meanwhile 1,000 to 4,000

Two die after ethnic clashes in Burundi

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — Two people were killed and another injured in a grenade attack at a hospital clinic after a week of ethnic unrest which ended in a huge rally for peace, sources here said.

The aid organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) said in a communiqué in Paris that the attack overnight Friday targeted a room of people hospitalised after clashes earlier in the week.

Two clinic staff were

killed, MSF added, denouncing the attack and calling for health centres to be spared the violence which has hit much of the rest of the capital.

According to local people, some of those being treated were members of armed Hutu extremist groups who had been injured in clashes with the Tutsi-dominated army.

Although no-one has claimed responsibility for the grenade attack, suspicion was centred on Tutsi

extremists also active in Bujumbura.

Police said 26 people — 25 militia members and an old woman — had died in clashes earlier in the week in the east of the capital, but diplomatic sources said the real toll could be higher.

Witnesses said hundreds of Hutu extremists were involved in fighting. Police said they had come from Zaire, where tens of thousands of Burundian Hutus had escaped ethnic unrest.

Meanwhile 1,000 to 4,000

women, according to various sources, demonstrated Saturday in Kigali for peace and against violence.

One of those taking part said they included the wives of President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo, former President Pierre Buyoya and assassinated President Melchior Ndaye.

Witnesses said hundreds of Hutu extremists were involved in fighting. Police said they had come from Zaire, where tens of thousands of Burundian Hutus had escaped ethnic unrest.

Meanwhile 1,000 to 4,000

Tension rises in Karachi after killing of MQM chief's brother.

KARACHI (AFP) — Troops and police were out on the streets of strife-torn Karachi in force Sunday to confront rising tension after the tortured bodies of an opposition leader's brother and nephew were found.

Gunfire echoed across Pakistan's largest city as the powerful Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), blaming security forces for the deaths of the relatives of its exiled leader Altaf Hussain, called a three day strike to mourn 62-year-old Nasir Hussain and his son Arif Hussain 28.

Residents said police and paramilitary forces had high profile patrols on the largely deserted streets of Pakistan's largest city, gripped by widespread religious and ethnic violence that has left more than 1,700 dead this year.

The latest victims were found with their hands and feet bound in the Gadap district of eastern Karachi late Saturday. They were later identified by members of the Hussain family in a private mortuary and anger over their deaths soon spread.

MQM leaders said the party chief's elder brother and nephew were tortured and killed by security forces. The authorities denied any knowledge of the killings.

Nasir Hussain and his son "went missing" last Tuesday. MQM Coordination Committee Convenor Ishfaq Azhar, said both had been detained by the security forces.

The killings came 16 days after the murder of Ahsan Ali Shah, younger brother of the provincial Chief Minister Abdullah Shah. Officials blamed the Nov. 23 ambush on the MQM, which also denied involvement.

Ishfaq Azhar, who is also a member of the Pakistani Senate described the deaths as "political revenge" and the "worst example of the state terrorism."

"It is shocking not only for the party but for the whole Mohajir community," he said.

Karachi shops and markets were closed and public and private transport remained off the roads.

There was gunfire in much of the city where at least five people were shot dead Saturday. Armed men set ablaze several vehicles in the run-up to the strike. Tension also mounted in other cities in Sindh province, including Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawabshah and Mirpurkhas, reports said.

Security forces in armoured vehicles have been deployed at key points and around government buildings, witnesses said, as recriminations over the deaths of the Hussains mounted.

Karachi Police Chief Shoaib Suddie denied that the MQM leader's brother and nephew had been arrested by the security forces.

"We had sent a senior police official to investigate the matter, but there was nobody to give us any sort of information," he told AFP.

"But another MQM leader Shoaib Bukhari said: 'We will not sit idly until those responsible are punished. He added that the party would announce new action after the burial of the two men Tuesday.'

The MQM chief, who lived in self-imposed exile in London since January 1992, condemned the killings in a message, saying that his slain relatives "had nothing to do with politics."



German supermodel Claudia Schiffer clutches a huge bouquet of roses upon arrival at a Moscow hotel. Ms. Schiffer is in Russia to participate in a pre-election performance entitled Our Home Russia organised by Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin (AFP photo)

Russian election campaign is tough, dangerous for runners

MOSCOW (R) — One week before a Russian election which the Communists are tipped to win, the campaign is tense, gruelling and dangerous for those involved, even though many voters still couldn't care less.

A survey reported in the daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta gave the Communists 22.9 per cent and another in the pro-Communist newspaper Sovetskaya Rossiya gave them 29 per cent, with their closest rivals on or below 10 per cent.

Exhausted party leaders, their eyes on a presidential election in six months time, are criss-crossing the world's biggest country in an increasingly bitter mid-winter campaign, hoping to reach the 20 per cent of voters who are undecided.

Two candidates have been killed, others have died in air and traffic accidents, and security authorities are increasingly nervous about the risk of violence in and around rebel Chechnya.

The latest victim was a party leader — Vitaly Savitsky of the Christian Democratic Union, who died in a car crash in St. Petersburg Saturday night.

He headed one of the 43 party lists competing for votes.

Despite glossy sideshows such as a visit to Moscow by German model Claudia Schiffer, the campaign bores the pants off most Russians, whose appetite for politics has been dulled over the past 10 years.

For many, the main task is to make ends meet and they hate seeing favourite pop TV programmes or soap operas being shifted to make room for campaigning.

"Everyone knows everything by now, preferences have been made and the television campaign causes

nothing but heartburn," said Mark Urnov, head of President Boris Yeltsin's analytical centre.

Addressing a conference in the Kremlin Saturday, he predicted a 65 per cent turnout. He agreed with pollsters' forecasts of a victory for President Yeltsin's Communist opponents, but said it posed no great danger for the Kremlin.

In a somewhat optimistic forecast, Mr. Urnov said:

"Under no circumstances will the left forces (Communists and their allies) have more than 30 per cent of the seats in the Duma." He added he meant both deputies elected through party lists and those in the first-past-the-post individual constituencies.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's centrist Our Home Is Russia, the liberal Yabloko Party, and the Women Of Russia grouping were also effectively ensured of forming sizeable groups in the Duma, Mr. Urnov said, summing up most opinion polls and research.

Many traditional backers of the conservative Agrarian Party were shifting to the Communists and the new Nationalist Congress of the Russian Communities (KRO), led by former top Kremlin official Yuri Skopov and charismatic retired General Alexander Lebed.

Gen. Lebed was also biting deep into the electorate of ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who was unlikely to repeat his surprisingly good showing of 1993, when he won more than 22 per cent of the vote. Mr. Urnov said that the chances of any party raising its rating radically in the last week — something Mr. Zhirinovsky did two years ago — were "close to zero".

Mr. Zhirinovsky, clearly

India: Al-Faran still holds hostages

Srinagar, India (R) — Indian authorities said Sunday they believed Al-Faran was still holding four Westerners hostage in Kashmir, casting doubt on a military statement that the shadowy group could have abandoned them or handed them on to others.

"Over hundred Al-Faran militants are still guarding four Westerners in the forests of Kukemag in south Kashmir," a senior police official told Reuters.

"According to our sources the number of Al-Faran militants guarding the hostages is increasing," added the official, who asked not to be named.

An Indian defence spokesman said Saturday authorities believed Al-Faran had banded the hostages over to local guerrillas or abandoned them in the Himalayan Mountains.

He said they drew the conclusion from the interro-

gation of three guerrillas he said belonged to Al-Faran who were captured in a clash with Indian security forces near Anantnag last Monday.

"Interrogation of the three apprehended mercenaries ... revealed that the Al-Faran has presumably abandoned the four foreign hostages somewhere in the high ranges or maybe handed them over to some local militant group," Defence Ministry spokesman Hariharan said in a statement.

American Donald Hutchings and Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells were kidnapped in south Kashmir on July 4 while on a trekking expedition.

A fourth captive, John Chibbles of the United States, escaped to safety four days later.

Al-Faran seized two more tourists, German Dirk Hasen and Norwegian Hans

Christian Ostroe, on the day Chibbles escaped. Ostroe was found decapitated in a remote Kashmiri forest on Aug. 13.

Defence spokesman Hariharan agreed Sunday the information from the captured guerrillas could have been wrong, and the hostages might still be in Al-Faran's hands.

"They are hard core militants and can change their statement any time, so we can not bank on what these three militants reveal during their interrogation and even we cannot rule out that the hostages are still with Al-Faran," he told Reuters.

Al-Faran has demanded the release of 15 jailed guerrillas including three Pakistani nationals from the Harkat Ul Ansar group.

India has refused to bow to the guerrillas' demands and ruled out a rescue operation for fear of endangering the hostages' lives.

Colombo says Jaffna fall augurs end of Tamil revolt

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka says the fall of the Tamil guerrilla stronghold at Jaffna signals the end of the rebellion and it sent in more troops to pursue the separatists.

"Our victory made the myth of the Tamil rebels burst," Sri Lankan Deputy Defence Minister Anuradha Ratwatte told the independent Sunday Island newspaper.

"Everybody in Sri Lanka as well as many in the world had come to believe in the so-called invincibility of the LTTE," he said of the Liberation Tigers Of Tamil Eelam.

The army's capture of Jaffna in its biggest offensive in 12 years of war marked "the beginning of the end" of the Tamil Tigers, Mr. Ratwatte said.

Sri Lanka's national news agency said the army was sending more troops, including commandos and air mobile troops fresh from their victory in Jaffna, to the east.

Warplanes struck a rebel base in the jungle at Kanjikudichchiaru, in eastern Amparai district, as troops on the ground hunted for guerrillas, defence officials said.

Rebel radio traffic intercepted by the army indicated the Tigers suffered heavy casualties in the air strikes, they added.

There was no immediate way of verifying the air strike report independently.

Police commandos and troops also surrounded Tiger bases in Amparai and Batticaloa where government officials say the rebels are trying to open a second front to keep their campaign going.

Mr. Ratwatte has said the army plans to attack the Tigers in the east where military intelligence sources say rebels have deployed large, mobile groups of fighters.

The army has been thinly stretched there after pulling

out most of its troops for the offensive to capture Jaffna.

Last Tuesday, hours after the army raised the national flag over Jaffna, rebels launched a suicide attack on an eastern police commando base, killing 29 police and losing 65 fighters.

Mr. Ratwatte said that if the rebels' war for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east was to end and peace to take hold, the government's political package offering extensive autonomy to Tamils had to be implemented.

The government says it wants to weaken the LTTE, who broke a ceasefire in April, to bring them back into talks to end the war in which more than 50,000 people have died since 1983.

Mr. Ratwatte said last week he estimates rebel strength had fallen to about 5,000, from 12,000 after the capture of Jaffna.

"Not even in the near future" he said. "What's happening in Jaffna is 99.9 per cent of the people have left the cleared areas. We don't know when they will need to do so."

The army plans to launch a new offensive to secure a land route to Jaffna shortly, she said last week.

Mr. Ratwatte said security forces had destroyed the rebels' command centre, communications network, a great deal of its resources and a large number of its fighters.

The offensive to capture Jaffna town was launched to lay the ground to implement the peace plan, he said.

Controlling and disarming the LTTE are necessary to implement any package," he said. "Military action is aimed at creating a situation where the political solution can be implemented."

Meanwhile moderate Sri Lankan Tamil parties say they will not shift from Colombo to Jaffna in the immediate future despite the fall of the northern rebel stronghold to the government.

The LTTE is expected to try to stop them.

K. Premachandran, secretary general of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), said the refugees must return in a "conducive atmosphere" and that the government's devolution package for minority Tamils must be implemented before his party would return to Jaffna.

"The government should discuss with the Tamil people the political package and the unit of devolution," he said.

"If (the package) is fulfilled, we will have no hesitation in going back to Jaffna. Now there is no

Australian conservatives recruit aboriginal to run for elections

SYDNEY (AFP) — The opposition Liberal Party announced Sunday that it has selected an aboriginal to fight the upcoming Australian election in a seat held by a renegade labour MP expelled from his party amid allegations of racism.

The contest for the Western Australian seat of Kalgoorlie, a huge constituency covering 2.2 million square kilometres, could also be one of the most crucial for Prime Minister Paul Keating's Labour government.

In a general election now widely tipped for March, Labour cannot afford to lose any seats — far less that of Kalgoorlie, its safest seat in Western Australia and one of the safest in the country.

But few party officials are willing to bet how Kalgoorlie will vote following Mr. Keating's decision last week to oust maverick backbencher Graeme Campbell, a strident opponent of Mr. Keating and of the government's policies on immigration and multiculturalism.

Mr. Campbell turned the unsophisticated outback constituency into a Labour stronghold with his strongly expressed views on issues such as immigration and race — despite the fact that more than a third of Kalgoorlie's 74,000 voters are aboriginal.

He frequently challenged his Labour colleagues by opposing Labour policy on immigration and on aboriginal reconciliation.

Roh accused of firing S. Korean Air Force chief over fighter plane deal

SEOUL (AFP) — Jailed ex-President Roh Tae-Woo

fired a South Korean Air Force chief in 1990 because he opposed a controversial military deal to buy F-16 jet fighters from U.S. firm General Dynamics, prosecutors said Sunday.

In an overnight inquiry, former air force Chief of Staff Chung Yong-Hu accused Mr. Roh of forcing him to retire for insisting on the choice of a different manufacturer's aircraft — McDonnell Douglas F-18s — for a new South Korean fighter project, Seoul daily Munhwa Ilbo said.

"I was held by army security officers and forced to retire," the prosecution quoted Gen. Chung as saying.

The former air force head was released early Sunday by prosecutors who have interrogated former military leaders to locate the sources of Mr. Roh's slush fund.

But two months later, Mr. Roh's administration signed the contract, it added.

In a marathon inquiry Friday, former Defense Minister Lee Jong-Koo acknowledged that the change was ordered by Mr. Roh. Mr. Lee's bank

were questioned again last week over another slush fund allegedly amassed by Mr. Roh's predecessor, Chun Doo-Hwan, who has been jailed on mutiny charges. But prosecutors have promised not to indict the businessmen.

Some of the businessmen

were questioned again last week over another slush fund allegedly amassed by Mr. Roh's predecessor, Chun Doo-Hwan, who has been jailed on mutiny charges. But prosecutors have promised not to indict the businessmen.

The MILF split from the MNLF in 1977 after that movement's Chairman Nur Misuari reversed a sepa-

ratis stand in the southern island of Mindanao in favour of autonomy in 13 provinces and nine cities for the Muslim minority in this largely Roman Catholic nation.

Troops to be sent to contain feud between rival Filipino Muslim insurgent groups

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AFP) — Government troops are to be dispatched to contain a battle between rival Muslim insurgent groups as three more fighters were killed in continuing clashes, the military said in this southern city Sunday.

Three members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) were killed when their group exchanged mortar rounds with the breakaway Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Saturday, following a week of sporadic fighting near the boundary of Palayan and Datu Piang

towns in Maguindanao province.

A military report said 300 troops from the 6th Infantry Division would be sent to the area to prevent the fighting from spreading.

Major Vivencio Baraga, operations officer of the division said "our troops will not interfere in their trouble but they are to help contain it."

Maj. Baraga said 12 Sunba armoured personnel carriers have also been sent to the area and that airplanes and helicopters have overflown the site for reconnaissance.

Four Muslim fighters

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Egypt at the polls

THE PARLIAMENTARY elections which were held in Egypt in the last two weeks were supposed to produce a general assembly that would share the governance of the country with the executive authority in accordance with the constitution and democratic norms. But what the elections led to instead were violence and recriminations unprecedented in Egypt's parliamentary polls and wide-scale attacks against the government's claim to democracy. The elections were seen by many as a charade, a prelude to further instability in Egypt and a sad reminder that authoritarianism refuses to let go in many a Third World country.

The ruling National Democratic Party took 416 out of the 444 seats in the People's Assembly. But that victory for the government came at the cost of accusations of fraud by the opposition, which rejected the polls, and extreme violence that took 40 lives and sent about 700 people to hospital.

In the words of one Egyptian columnist, "the results (of the polls) signal the fall of democracy and the beginning of an era of one party rule.... Neither Hitler nor Mussolini succeeded in gaining such a majority."

Such was one reaction to the polls at home. The international one is even more cynical, with the world media labelling the elections a facade and mocking the claim to democracy that the Egyptian government continuously makes.

The handling of the elections bodes ill for Egypt and its effort to curb opposition violence that has plagued the country for months.

Against such backdrop, the bewildering question is why the government held the elections in the first place. The Egyptian and like-minded governments should make up their minds as to what kind of regime they want to have. Their actions indicate strong intolerance of opposing views. If such regimes are still uncomfortable with the requirements of democracy, they should not make any claims to the opposite. Actions speak much louder than words. Over a 90 per cent victory for the government be-speaks many things, but certainly does not indicate totally free and fair elections.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

REPORTS THAT the Israelis have changed their minds about installing early warning systems on the Golan as a pre-condition for Israeli forces pull-out from the occupied Syrian heights are encouraging, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer in Al Ra'i daily. The reports, coming on the eve of Shimon Peres's visit to the United States where he will discuss prospects for peace with Syria during his meeting with the U.S. administration, indicate that the Israelis and the Syrians have moved closer to a peace treaty which everyone hopes will mark the start of a comprehensive peace in the region, said the writer. Needless to say that the key to peace lies with the Israeli withdrawal from Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian lands occupied since 1967, said the writer, who stressed that a total peace can be achieved through total withdrawal. The Israelis should also give back to the Palestinians the Arab city of Jerusalem and recognise the Arab rights in the city if they want a meaningful peace and stability in the Palestinian lands, continued the writer. If Israel wants to become a full and natural partner in the Middle East, said the writer, it has to give in to legitimate Arab demands and return the usurped territories. He expressed hope that the Israeli premier's talks with the U.S. administration will pave the way for the aspired peace.

A WRITER in Al Dustour raised the question of Jordanian women marrying non-Jordanian Arab men and their children, demanding that these children be recognised as Jordanian citizens allowed to live and study and work in the Kingdom. Ahmad Shaker said that Jordanian women's dignity and rights should be respected, especially those who married in Jordan and lived all their life with their non-Jordanian husbands in the country, said the writer. Citing a number of cases where children of Jordanian mothers and non-Jordanian Arab fathers have been barred from entering schools in Jordan, the writer said that such practice is causing a great harm to the children, who cannot be sent abroad and separated from their mothers who live and work in Jordan.

Human Rights File

By Dr. Waleed M. Sa'di

Abusing modern science

IS IT not shocking that India, the biggest democracy in the world, still practises and tolerates selective abortion on a wide scale and that this de facto policy has effectively led to female infanticide in the country? According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), there are already some 50 million girls 'missing' from the Indian population before the very eyes of the government.

In actual terms, what is happening in India is occurring in many other developing countries, where the preference to the male in conjunction with the mounting constraints of contemporary life is taking a heavy toll on females. This infanticide is taking place before our eyes thanks to modern science, which has enabled parents to determine the sex of their children before birth and terminate those who are females in a manner reminiscent of the dark ages before the advent of Islam in the Arab World. Even in our own country, many parents are suspected of exploiting the modern medicine with the aid and comfort of their physicians to end the life of their would-be daughters for the same reason that many Indian parents are doing the same. This alarming state of affairs calls, in my view, for urgent legislation on the national as well as the international fronts to criminalise these practices and hopefully stem the tide of female infanticide before it is too late.

It can be argued by cynics that we already have ample legislation on the national level against illegal abortions and that these laws are adequate to deal with the problem if

only people take them seriously. On the international level, it will be pointed out, there are already several conventions, notably the one on the right of the child, to prohibit this practice if there is only a political will to translate these effective laws into deeds.

I myself would argue otherwise. Whenever there is a specific crisis looming in the horizon, it is infinitely more powerful to legislate on it per se. Imagine if the international community has a separate and distinct treaty banning selective abortions as such and penalising the practice in the most effective and forceful way as crime against humanity. No doubt such a concerted effort would bring to fruition the attempts to frustrate the ill-conceived cultural preferences for sons instead of daughters. Only by making the policy and practice a crime against humanity would the world rid itself of the evil practice of female infanticide in the shortest possible time. Why shouldn't we make it a crime against humanity when some nations still have a culture that not only favours one sex over the other but destroys and kills female fetus outright? I should think that Jordan can spearhead this campaign at the United Nations with a view to articulating and adopting a convention against elective abortion as a matter of the highest priority.

The international community should also target modern science and make sure that it cannot be exploited to advance the goals of inhuman cultures. Humanising science and technology has eluded mankind for much too long at a

time when advancement in them are progressing at a pace that is beyond the imagination of even scientists. Genetic engineers threaten to make human being robots before we know it unless immediate action is also taken to control and guide genetic manipulation. There is so much that can still be adopted to check the direction of modern technology and science. It is one thing to put science in the service of man and quite another to render human beings the servants of science. India and other countries have shown in the most vivid way how science was put to the wrong use. Should the world wait till we have an international population mostly of men before we all take timely remedial action.

Islam has introduced an early effective struggle against female infanticide and this struggle has become one of the main hallmarks of the religion ever since. Against this backdrop, Jordan would be well-poised to initiate a contemporary campaign against this dreadful phenomenon. Jordan's missions in New York and Geneva could be instructed to spearhead this programme of action by first calling for a conference on the subject whose mandate could include the articulation and adoption of a set of principles on the crisis. Any such effort can certainly draw on the basic tenets of the Convention on the Right of the Child and then make additional elaborations to meet the urgent needs of the problem. Whatever needs to be done in this vein, I hope it will be done fast.

loss of borders, physical or psychological.

Are the current strikes the No camp's revenge? Not consciously, as Europe's future is not at the centre of France's political and social debate, as it is in Britain. Only postmen and electricity workers refer, in their demands, to Brussels decisions to liberalise their sectors. But implicitly, it's France's drive towards the single currency and the tough German-inspired conditions imposed by the Maastricht treaty that are at stake.

Mr. Chirac's about-turn on his election promises were undoubtedly caused by the need to reassure markets about the pursuit of the franc fort and the country's ability to reduce its deficit in time for the single currency, officially on January 1, 1999. The toughness of his prime minister's plan and the announcement of a two-year austerity period stem from this schedule. For France is terrified of being left out of Europe's core.

Why is France so obsessed about this plan? It's a question France's élite is not asking. It sees in a closer European Union the only way for France to compensate for its loss of status in the post-colonial world. This could only be done in alliance with Germany, as Britain was looking the other way.

The meeting this Thursday in Baden-Baden between President Chirac and Chancellor Kohl will bring a new confirmation of this key element of French strategy, whether it's Mitterrand or Chirac in the Elysée Palace. The question is whether French leaders have the strength to carry this programme through, or whether French people will hury in the same breath Juppé's plan and political ambitions, but also dreams of monetary union.

The writer is foreign editor of *Libération*. The article is reprinted from the *Guardian*.

Despair on the streets

Pierre Haski argues France's currency ambitions have exposed a chasm between the establishment and the 'excluded'



-@ Steve Bell 1995 -

This leaves the door open to Jean-Marie Le Pen's extreme-right National Front to represent and capitalise on the popular protest movement.

The current strike movement is a clear reflection of this growing gap: No major mainstream political figure can claim to represent the strikers' aspirations and demands. Worse, many figures on the left agree directly with Prime Minister Alain Juppé's plan to revamp the deficit-ridden social-security system, but do not have the courage to say so. Indeed, many of Juppé's suggestions were developed in his time by socialist prime minister Michel Rocard, who failed to carry them through.

This has been a further blow to politicians' credibility in France. The past decade has cost the French political élite dearly and widened the gap between the population and its rulers, whether from the right or the left. The growing arrogance of the political class, more and more made up of énarques — graduates of the élite Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) — rather than from the ranks of moribund political parties, combined with large corruption scandals affecting the whole political spectrum, have helped discredit politicians. The nation had greeted the end of ideology in the 1980s as a welcome development — but it has been replaced only by a void in ideas.

The current strike movement is a clear reflection of this growing gap: No major mainstream political figure can claim to represent the strikers' aspirations and demands. Worse, many figures on the left agree directly with Prime Minister Alain Juppé's plan to revamp the deficit-ridden social-security system, but do not have the courage to say so. Indeed, many of Juppé's suggestions were developed in his time by socialist prime minister Michel Rocard, who failed to carry them through.

Without concrete moves towards the total destruction of existing weapons, threshold states will not keep their part of any new nuclear bargain, and it will not be possible to put in place the kind of verification measures that will stop rogue states and groups from joining the nuclear weapons action.

We will face the prospect of a fresh round of nuclear competition, with multiple nuclear players threatening to use their weapons, either at the state or substate level, in a way that will make nonsense of current strategies of stable deterrence.

It is true that with the Strategic Arms Reduction process, the so-called START process, substantial dismantling of arsenals is under way. In May, the international community agreed to extend the nonproliferation treaty indefinitely, although many countries made clear their bitter regret at having done so when France thereafter resumed nuclear testing, while China continued to test.

Moreover, there is now real confidence that 1996 will see the conclusion of a genuinely comprehensive test ban treaty.

But what then? The world will still face the threat of a nuclear arsenal of more than 40,000 weapons. Even if START II is fully implemented by 2003, which at the moment seems depressingly unlikely, there will be some 12,000 warheads in existence.

How, in these circumstances, can we prevent the proliferation of existing weapons technology and material to countries and groups that are not part of the declared nuclear

tude.

Trade unions have shown similar divisions, with the secretary-general of the country's second-largest union, Nicole Notat of the CEDT, refusing to join others in condemning the plan out-right. France has one of Europe's lowest levels of membership in trade unions and political parties. This lack of representation in the current crisis: no one really talks for the excluded, the millions of workers who feel insecure in the midst of the country's transformation. This explains the sense of despair, the nothing-to-lose attitude.

This gap was first exposed by the 1992 referendum campaign on the Maastricht treaty, which was narrowly won by the Yes camp, including all major mainstream political figures. The French love affair with Europe was over, victim of the deep recession of the late 1980s. The referendum was both a revolt against a technocratic Euro-dream (or what looked like one), and against the French élite itself. France appeared as a two-speed country, one modernising and outward-looking, the other inward-looking and terrified by the

Step by step together towards world without nuclear weapons

By Gareth Evans

CANBERRA — The case for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is more powerful now than it has ever been.

With the end of the cold war, the superpower standoff has given way to a security environment in which people around the world have dared to hope for an end, once and for all, to the threat of nuclear annihilation.

It is true that with the Strategic Arms Reduction process, the so-called START process, substantial dismantling of arsenals is under way. In May, the international community agreed to extend the nonproliferation treaty indefinitely, although many countries made clear their bitter regret at having done so when France thereafter resumed nuclear testing, while China continued to test.

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How, in these circumstances, can we prevent the proliferation of existing weapons technology and material to countries and groups that are not part of the declared nuclear

weapons. We thought there should be.

Australia has some solid disarmament credentials, particularly with its role in bringing the Chemical Weapons Convention to conclusion — an exercise which convinced me that if we could build an intrusive and credible verification regime for the chemical industry, it had to be possible for nuclear technology.

And nonexisting middle powers like Australia can perhaps sometimes be a little more adventurous in these policy matters than more established friends.

Finding credible answers on how to rid the world of nuclear weapons will not be easy. The commission's mandate is ambitious, far-reaching and complex.

But in the climate of opinion that now exists worldwide, it is not unrealistic. The people are in many ways ahead of their governments.

The first and biggest challenge is to convince governments around the world that it is no longer necessary to passively accept the existence of nuclear weapons as an inevitable fact of life. And in that, at least, we think we are succeeding.

The writer is Australia's foreign minister. The article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

The commission will bring together an outstanding group of 15 eminent statesmen, scientists, disarmament experts and military strategists from around the world to try to prepare a practical, step-by-step blueprint for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons — a blueprint which at the same time would maintain stability and security during the transition and after the goal is accomplished.

The commission includes Michel Rocard, a former prime minister of France; Robert McNamara, a former U.S. secretary of defence; Joseph Roibhai, who received the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize and is the founder of the Pugwash Conferences; Field Marshal the Lord Carver, former chief of the British defence staff; the Oxford-based Australian strategic analyst Robert O'Neill; Maj.-Gen. Theophilus Theophilus, a member of the European Parliament and former president of the International Peace Bureau; Rolf Ekeus, executive chairman of the U.N. Special Commission that has worked to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; Roald Sagdeev, science adviser to former president Mikhail Gorbachev, and General Lee Butler, until recently head of the U.S. Strategic Air Command.

Other members — Celso Amorim from Brazil, Jayantha Dhanapala from Sri Lanka, Nabil Elaraby from Egypt, Ryukichi Imai from Japan and Ronald McCoy from Malaysia — have distinguished records of achievement in arms control and international diplomacy.

The convenor of the group will be Richard Butler, Australia's permanent U.N. representative and former disarmament ambassador.

These are not woolly-headed idealists but figures who have lived through the cold war and have enormous experience of disarmament issues. Not all of them are absolutely con-

By Matt Crenson

FOR MORE than 2,000 years the ancient Egyptian art of mummification lay dormant, practiced by none and known to scholars only through the bodies of the pharaohs and a few ancient texts.

Then Bob Brier went to Baltimore.

Working last year in a specially prepared room at the University of Maryland Medical School, Brier attempted to reproduce an ancient Egyptian mummification down to the last detail. He used bronze and stone replicas of ancient embalmers' tools, anointed the body with spices purchased in the Cairo spice bazaar and dried it out with the same stuff that the Egyptians used to dehydrate their pharaohs.

By performing the procedure exactly as the Egyptians did it, Brier hoped to learn the kinds of things that aren't in books.

"There are certain things that you can only learn by doing it yourself," said Brier, who is chairman of the philosophy department at the C.W. Post College of Long Island University in Brooklyn, N.Y.

So one day in May 1994, Brier found himself bending over the body of a man who had donated his remains to science. At the

professor's side were Ron Wade, the director of the Maryland state anatomy board, and two morticians who work at the University of Maryland Medical School.

According to the few written sources that Egyptologists have, the first step of mummification is straightforward. An account written by the Greek tourist Herodotus in 450 B.C. says the ancient embalmers simply pulled the brain out through the nose with a metal hook.

"Yeah!" Brier said contentedly. "You go try it."

Ancient techniques

Presumably, the techniques the researchers improvised to extract the brain and to solve other problems were fairly close to the methods ancient Egyptian embalmers used. That's what makes his experimental approach so valuable, Brier said.

Other Egyptologists question the scientific value of reproducing ancient Egyptian mummification, however.

"I thought that it was tasteless, and I thought that

Mummy's the word

Curious researcher recreates embalming process used to preserve the Pharaohs in ancient Egypt

it was also macabre," said Betsy Bryan, an Egyptologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. "I don't feel that there is any real scientific contribution that one can identify in mummifying a body today, and the main reason for that is that we know an enormous amount about Egyptian mummification techniques."

Odors

Most of what's known about the mummification process comes from studying mummies themselves. Many of the pharaohs, including King Tut, Ramses II and Thutmose IV, have been either unwrapped, X-rayed or both. In addition,

dozens of less-illustrious personages have had their remains analyzed by scientists.

But the modern understanding of mummification is based not on studying mummies themselves.

Egyptologists have clues from the few ancient texts that do describe the process, and they've done experiments with chickens, rats and other animals.

Brier doesn't dispute that plenty is known about mummification, and that there are ethical questions about doing one yourself. But he points out that the body was treated at least as respectfully as most that are donated to medical science.

A medical cadaver usually gets chopped into pieces, with the parts going either to medical students, who dissect them, or to surgeons who use them to try out new techniques.

And Brier wanted to learn about mummification by doing — to discover, for example, that an obsidian blade works better than a bronze one for making an abdominal incision. He wanted to know what a mummy-in-progress smells like.

"Throughout the whole

process we never encountered any unpleasant odors," Brier reported recently during a lecture at Southern Methodist University. The local chapter of the American Research Centre in Egypt, an organization, brought Brier to Dallas so he could describe how he performed the first known human mummification by ancient Egyptian methods in more than 2,000 years.

Packed in natron

The process begins with the removal of the organs from the body. Because the brain, liver, kidneys and other internal organs contain a lot of water and are deep in the body, they're hard to dry out in place. The Egyptians mummified the organs individually.

"Natron is the key to the whole process," Brier said. Natron is a naturally occurring mixture that is basically baking soda and table salt. It sucks moisture out of a human body just as

King presents state awards

(Continued from page 1)

country, along with stability and national cohesion, allows to be an example which the Arab countries could adopt."

"The leadership's political tolerance has created a crossing point between the opposition and the regime without bloodshed and violence," Mr. Habashneh said.

The State Awards were launched in 1977 but were halted for 11 years due to economic and financial reasons. They aim at encouraging intellectual and artistic creativity as well as appreciating distinguished work in these fields.

The awards, which include merit certificate and a cash prize of JD 5,000 to D 10,000, went this year to 2 distinguished Jordanians whose work was appreciated

Sharif Zeid

(Continued from page 1) amendments) are not justified, since (such amendments) have not yet been drafted, let alone finalized.

How can the press launch a campaign against amendments that are still being conceived, he asked. And then, how can the "responsible" journalists stand against slight legislative changes that are intended to deter "irresponsible" behaviour by other journalists, he added.

The prime minister did not disclose what the amendments were or what specific articles in the law they relate to. But the minister of information, Khaled Karaki, who attended the meeting, explained that they did not entail new jail sentences for violators of the law.

There will probably be a couple of slight amendments to the law, Dr. Karaki said, without elaborating. What

the government can assure journalists of, he went on to say, is that the changes will ultimately be worked out with the Jordan Press Association and to its satisfaction.

In the 45-minute debate that ensued, the prime minister listened to different views by the editors on how the "yellow press" might be tackled, short of amending the press law, which was passed by the 11th Parliament in 1993. But while he did not say whether the government would abandon plans to change the law if the journalists themselves would contribute to solving the issue of tabloid "sensationalism," he left the door open for such an effort to be made. It is up to the Jordan Press Association to organize an effort in this regard, he would only say.

Our goal is clear in that something has to be done (in order to ensure the practice of responsible journalism in the country), and the government leaves it up to others to do their share, he added.

The prime minister did not rule out the possibility that an independent council might eventually be set up to monitor and deal with press violations in the country. Such a council was called for in the original draft of the 1993 law only to be dropped later just before it was presented to Parliament for approval. But the idea proved too controversial among the editors themselves to leave a meaningful impact on yesterday's meeting.

Dr. Karaki, on the other hand, broached the idea of an altogether new press and publications law that talks solely about press freedoms, while violations would be left for the Penal Code to deal with. The problem with such a solution, though, is that journalists would end up facing penalties in cases of violation of the law.

According to reports circulating among journalists, the draft amendments to the law would include empowering the government with the right to close down publications, raising from JD 50,000 to JD 100,000 the minimum capital for newspapers, imposing stiffer penalties on violators of the law and requiring chief editors to have been members of the Jordan Press Association for at least seven years.

However, both the prime minister and the information minister dismissed these reports as either false or inaccurate, stressing that no final decision has yet been taken on the nature of the changes that will be introduced to the law.

It is a matter of public record that it was the first government of Sharif Zeid in 1989 that laid the groundwork for the new age of democracy and pluralism in this country, Dr. Karaki told the editors. It is inconceivable that a government led by such a prime minister would now attempt to limit freedom of the press, he said.

Shbeilat remanded for 14 days

(Continued from page 1)

"We will call on the government to accept the other opinion and freedom of expression," Mr. Huneidi said. The professional associations, the JEA in particular, have been at loggerheads with the government mainly over peace with Israel. Several associations have threatened their members with dismissal if they normalized relations with Israel.

In a speech delivered last month before army and intelligence officers, the King called on the "silent majority" to come out and express support for peace. He praised the performance of professional associations, especially the engineering and the medical associations which had threatened their members against participating in the Middle East and North Africa economic summit that was held here last

October. In his speech, the King questioned if that was democracy or dictatorship and called on the associations to leave "politics for politics."

Mr. Shbeilat, a former deputy, was convicted and sentenced in 1992 to 20 years in jail on charges that he belonged to an illegal Islamic group called Shahab Al Nafeer (the Vanguards of Islamic Youth) which aimed at toppling the regime. He was also convicted of acquisition of illegal weapons.

Mr. Shbeilat was freed shortly thereafter after the King issued a general amnesty. Upon release from jail, the independent Islamist announced that he was quitting politics because of what he said was the silence of political groups over "violations of democracy." He came back to the scene where he won the JEA presidency two years later.

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GCC states set to keep spending low next year

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will likely keep spending low in 1996 as they pursue reforms to tackle a persistent budget deficit and repair economic damage caused by weak oil prices, experts said Saturday.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, which produce nearly one-fifth of the world's crude supplies, are set to approve 1996 budgets similar to 1995 when most of them cut spending.

"Most GCC states will either maintain a similar level of expenditure or reduce it in 1996 as they do not expect a major increase in oil revenues because of unchanged production," a Gulf-based economist said. "They realise low government spending means slower economic growth but there is no point in carrying out reforms when the deficit becomes worse."

GCC states depend heavily on oil export earnings and a decline in crude prices over the past decade has hurt their

economies and forced them to trim expenditure and borrow or withdraw from reserves abroad to shore up the budget shortfall.

The six members — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — are expected to earn around \$7 billion in extra revenue in 1995 over their 1994 income of nearly \$70 billion.

The rise is because of an increase of around \$1.5 in oil prices.

Experts said they expected revenues in 1996 to be equivalent to those in 1995 as oil prices will likely range between \$16 and \$17.

Oil production will also be equivalent as OPEC has rolled over its official ceiling of 24.52 million barrels per day for the first half of next year and producers from the GCC are showing unusual restraint in their output.

Industry analysts said the 12-nation group could agree

on another rollover in the second half despite higher world demand.

They expect the bulk of the growth in demand to be met by independent oil producers, which have sharply boosted their market share over the past years at OPEC's expense.

Economists said Saudi Arabia, the world's oil superpower, would likely set expenditure at around \$40 billion as part of its 1995-1999 development plan, which envisaged spending of nearly \$200 billion.

It will be equivalent to the 1995 expenditure, which was the lowest since 1988 when expenditure dipped to a record low of \$37.6 billion because of a steep fall in oil revenues due to a price collapse.

Riyadh launched reforms four years ago to cushion the impact of weak oil prices and put its economy back on track.

If slashed spending from a

record \$73 billion in 1991 to \$40 billion in 1995.

This trimmed the deficit from a peak of \$33.6 billion to \$4 billion and officials have forecast the actual shortfall to be lower by the end of the year due to the oil price improvement.

The UAE, the second biggest GCC oil producer, also intends to maintain expenditure despite an expected increase in non-oil revenue due to higher return from overseas investment and a rise in taxes and services fees.

"The 1996 budget will be almost equivalent to that of 1995 while the deficit could be similar or even lower," said UAE finance and industry ministry undersecretary Naser Al Nuweis.

The reforms in the GCC also include privatisation to ease the financial burden on governments and tap the enormous resources of the private sector.

Tietmeyer: German rates no obstacle to growth

FRANKFURT (R) — German interest rates are already low and are not obstructing economic growth, Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer said Sunday, only four days before the central bank council meets to discuss monetary policy.

Mr. Tietmeyer told German Radio the central bank would check "very carefully" whether another move on leading interest rates was possible after the last rate cut in August.

"But our interest rate levels are already relatively low and, from that direction there are hardly any obstacles to the (economic) growth process," Mr. Tietmeyer said according to the text of the interview for German Radio.

Mr. Tietmeyer's comments follow just days after data showed German gross domestic product (GDP) stagnated in the third quarter, provoking a round of calls for the Bundesbank to cut rates at its meeting on Thursday to revive the sluggish economy.

Mr. Tietmeyer noted that economists believe the economy is going through a weak phase but that growth will resume in 1996. He added that growth would depend on world trade expanding further, favourable cost trends, and public spending restraint.

But Heiner Flassbeck, economic expert at the respected DIW Research Institute in Hamburg, told Der Spiegel magazine a rate cut was needed to give a shot in the arm to corporate investment and prevent a wave of layoffs.

The salaried workers' union DAG said the central bank needed to cut at least half a percentage point off key rates, warning that a slide into another recession was possible if the Bundesbank failed to act.

The Bundesbank last cut its key interest rates to August, slicing 50 basis points off the Lombard and discount rates which now stand at 5.50 and 3.50 per cent respectively.

Mr. Tietmeyer told German Radio the central bank's job was to secure price stability as the foundation for eco-

nomic growth and not to set economic policy.

"But we will check very carefully, especially to light of the money supply development and our (M3) target setting for next year, whether we can take another step. At the moment I cannot say anything about that," he said.

Mr. Tietmeyer said last week the next rates decision would be "appropriate" to the M3 money supply target for 1996.

Analysts said — in light of the normalisation of M3 growth after months of sluggishness — the comment could signal either a rate cut or no change in policy on Thursday.

But they also said the central bank, which traditionally pays only scant attention to the immediate needs of the economy, could be preparing the ground to use M3 as a front to justify a rate cut after the alarming third quarter GDP data.

The Bundesbank said at the last easing in August that M3 — its prime policy indicator — was the prime justification for the move but the rate cuts coincided with mounting worries that the mark's appreciation was undermining German export prospects.

While divided on the chance of a rate cut on Thursday, economists say the next easing is only a matter of time, citing low inflation, the fragile economy and the firm market.

Mr. Tietmeyer said the last round of wage agreements had not helped strengthen the German economy.

The last payround for the engineering and chemical sectors resulted in wage deals valued at between 3.6 and four per cent annually, far above annual inflation of under two per cent, and pushing Germany's steep labour costs a notch higher.

Those deals, combined with the mark's appreciation against the dollar this year of around 10 per cent, provoked howls of pain from Germany's struggling exporters and a round of threats to accelerate the relocation of production abroad.

Russia is far from full recovery

MOSCOW (R) — Russia has a long way to go before it is out of an economic crisis, despite a slowdown in inflation, halt in the fall in output and a stable rouble, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said.

"These successes do not mean victory in our fight against the economic crisis, in fact they probably do not even mean we have reached a decisive turning point," he said in an interview.

Monthly consumer price inflation slowed to a post-reform low of 4.5 per cent in November, and the government is forecasting an average monthly inflation rate next year of 1.9 per cent.

Despite inflation the rouble has been stable since summer.

Last week the government extended a soft peg on the rouble introduced in July, restricting its fluctuations against the dollar to between

4.550-5.150 per dollar for the first six months of 1996.

The current 4,300-4,900 range runs to the end of this year.

The government bad to find a reasonable balance between supporting industries and preventing a new inflation surge, stimulating investments and raising living standards, Mr. Chernomyrdin said.

"I'm categorically opposed to any radicalism, both right-wing and left-wing... Any attempts to turn the steering wheel sharply are fraught with a national collapse," he said.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said that although the rouble's stability was hitting exports, it was also encouraging foreign investments.

"Our policy has been recently fully subordinated to the idea of stimulating domestic investment," he said. "The main strategic task of the Russian economy is to ensure a normal investment process. If we fail to solve this problem within the next year or two, we will be thrown back by decades in our economic development."

"Russia has paid for its first steps out of the systemic crisis... By running down some irreplaceable major resources," he added.

Exports, which helped Russia survive the start of economic reforms, were becoming less profitable as

domestic prices approached world levels, he said.

Smaller export earnings, coupled with a lack of investment and social problems, posed new threats to economic reforms.

"The time of profitable exports is passing. But Russia lives from the money received from such exports."

"Compared with these strategic problems, our successes look pretty modest... The government is losing the right to make mistakes, because any unthoughtful move can lead to catastrophic consequences," he said in the interview published two weeks before a parliamentary election.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Plan activities which will also please members of your loved ones today. Be careful not to disagree at home in the evening.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) Get your routines working efficiently and accomplish a good deal. Be courteous and tactful towards those who are very knowledgeable.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 19) Know how much you need financially today and work the angles needed so that you can attain it with the assistance of knowledgeable individuals.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You have personal hopes and wishes at this time and you can apply yourself seriously so that you attain them in being successful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make the right arrangements which can help you to gain some most cherished wish. Show more love for the one you love.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Showing allies that you appreciate the relationship is wise for you at this time. This can be very profitable later this evening.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) Handle any public or civic activities when your thinking is clear and you are full of pep. Show that you are properly grateful.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) Be alert to changes which can enure to your benefit so be willing to get out of the old. Rest up for activities later in the week.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your intuitive faculties are working very well so follow them and use your best judgement in important matters today and be successful.

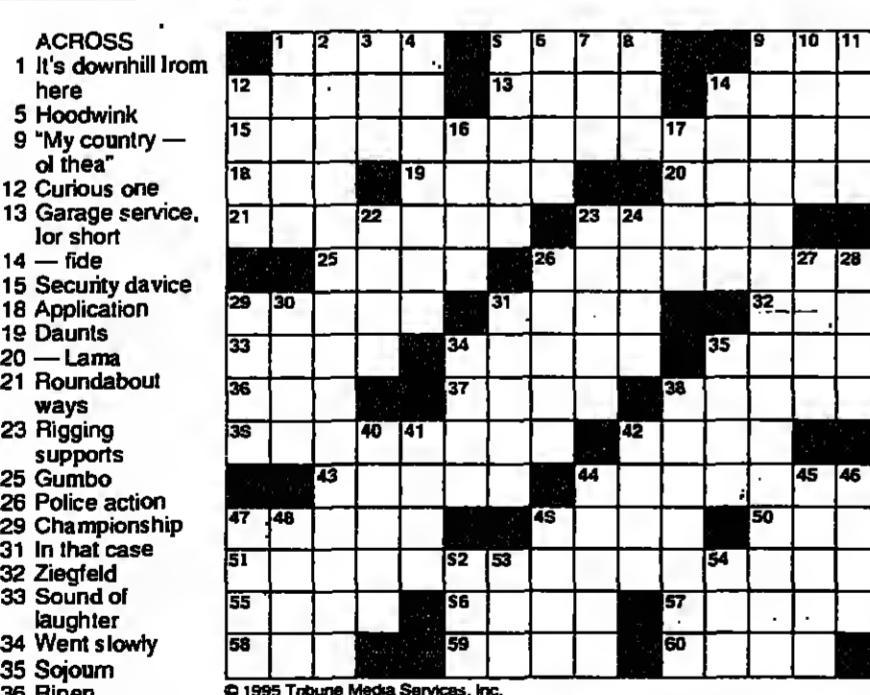
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Show more patience with a highly sensitive person today and you can come to a fine understanding for later in the evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You are happiest when busily occupied with activities which are prosperous and this is a day when you can accomplish a good deal.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are able to bring visionary ideas down to a practical level today and bring more success to your self and your loved ones.

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THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick



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Yesterday's puzzle solved:
6 On the — (fighting)
7 Sash
8 Delibes or Durocher
9 Job essentials
10 Peruvian
11 Hector Hugh Munro
12 Run swiftly
14 Sirdar noise
16 Ibsen character
17 A state; abbr.
22 Another state: abbr.
23 Stages
24 Breathe in gasps
26 Sleep
27 — Balor
28 Playthings
29 "The Mousa Roared"
30 Stage villain
31 Musical groups
34 Naval rank abbr.
35 Compositions for one

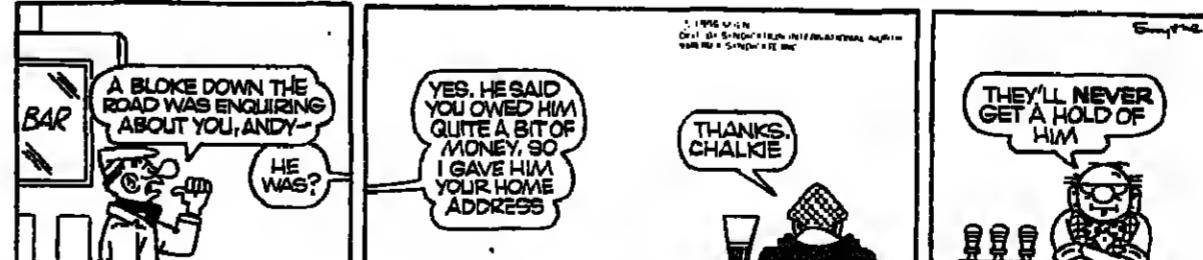
38 Sailor
39 Act badly
40 Japanese people
41 Lhasa —
42 Small brook
43 Roasting rod
44 Cog
45 Melodramatic

46 Old name for Tokyo
47 Ura —
48 Biblical judge
49 Pool item

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



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Birthstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon

Growing investment in stock funds fuels Wall Street boom

NEW YORK (AFP) — Americans are ploughing record amounts of savings into stock funds fuelling a long, old performance this year in Wall Street, which market analysts see continuing for some time.

Each month, American households pour some \$10 billion — after deducting redemptions — into mutual funds for investment in the stock market, according to Investment Company Institute (ICI), which researches some 5,700 such funds who have the bulk of private savings.

The growing popularity of stock funds has played a key role in Wall Street's record-breaking streak. On Tuesday, the Dow Jones index

came close to the 5,200-point mark just two weeks after breaking through the landmark 5,000-point barrier.

While private savings in the United States remains relatively weak (four per cent of income), mutual funds channel a large share of this money to the stock market. It also represents two-thirds of all pension funds, providing a steady, solid base to the stock market shielded from daily fluctuations.

Private savings and pension funds combined account at present for half of the trillion dollars placed in investment funds quoted on the stock market, and the level continues to rise.

At first sight, the public's interest in the stock market

could be written off as a passing fad motivated by simple greed. But there is more to it than that, says John Collins, market analyst for ICI.

"The performance of the market and the flow of money into stock funds are not closely correlated," he said. "Last year, the market was pretty flat and inflows were at a record level."

This love-relationship with stocks follows a drop in interest rates which made long-term, fixed-rate investments less attractive.

Now that inflation is under control, stocks have resumed their traditional role for Americans, said Rosanne Cahn, an economist with C.S. First Boston.

At the end of the 1960s, she explained, "equities accounted for more than half of all household financial assets." That level dropped to 24 per cent in 1982 and it has risen to 35 per cent since then, she added.

In 10 years, Ms. Cahn said, mutual fund assets (stocks, bonds, unit trust investments on the financial markets) have quintupled to \$2.6 trillion, with one third of them in the hands of private investors.

Nancy Dunnan, financial adviser and the author of several investment guides, attributes the popularity of mutual funds to their convenience for those who lack time and experience to build their own portfolios.

The flow of capital to the stock market fell off slightly

in October, but it should rise to record levels in November, according to Robyn Tice, spokesman for Fidelity Investments, the country's leading investment company.

"The Dow passing 5,000 had a lot to do with investors looking at opportunities to participate in the market."

The arrival of a new class of inexperienced private investor during a booming market is unsettling to some analysts, who fear that at the slightest danger the newcomers might stampede into a selling frenzy, forcing invest-

ment companies to dig into their assets to meet the sudden withdrawal of funds.

"These new investors haven't yet been tested by a market downturn of some length of time," warned Anthony Spire, chief investment adviser at San Francisco-based Spire, Kaplan, Bischel and Associates.

"When that is the case, then we will see if human nature has changed and if they don't get scared," he added.

Recent experience, instead, has shown that professionals are the first to lose

their cool in troubled times. It happened during the bond crash of February 1994, and again during the Mexican crisis. Private investors braved both storms with nerves of steel.

"Households respond to changing fundamentals slowly. Institutional investors respond quickly and in a herd," said Ms. Cahn.

"The truth is the opposite of the fear — as long as interest rates stay low, huge sums of money should be gradually reallocated to equities," Ms. Cahn pre-

BUSINESS DAILY 5

A review of news from the Arabic press

Civil servants likely to get salary increases from January 1996

★ ACCORDING TO sources at the Lower House, the head and members of the House's Finance Committee have asked the government to effect a salary increase from the beginning of 1996 and not from May of next year. The sources said there are high hopes that the government would agree to this public demand. The head and members of the committee have hinted to the minister of finance that they would insist, during the debate on the budget, on effecting the increase in January, the sources added. They pointed out that the increase would be JD 10 and would include classified personnel, staff on contract and daily-paid workers. It was not known whether reformed civil servants will be included. A number of deputies said that they will demand in their speeches during the debate on the budget that the raise be "hefty" and benefit all government employees including the reformed (Al Ra'i).

Minister of supply shortens period for keeping prices fixed

★ THE MINISTER OF supply decided to reduce the period of maintaining prices fixed before reconsidering them again from six months to four months. The decision came in response to demands from the association of foodstuff traders that the ministry either float prices or reduce the period required for new studies. Responding to the minister's decision, the association said the measure was not enough and demanded that the period be further shortened if prices are not to be floated. The association's request came in light of big rises in prices of imported fresh and frozen meat, milk and milk products as a result of exporting countries' lifting subsidies on these products in preparations for applying World Trade Organization rules (Al Ra'i).

Ramtha residents break water metres to avenge questionable consumption

★ RAMTHA WATER Directorate is being financially drained having spent more than JD 300,000 over the past three years to install new water metres at houses where old metres were deliberately damaged. The number of water metres broken during last year alone totalled about 4,000, a maintenance employee said. The employee, Qasem Al Hayek, attributed the reasons behind the residents of Ramtha breaking their water metres to higher spending on water consumption. "When the Water Authority official reads the metre, families complain of more than usual consumption and take their revenge by breaking the metre or removing it completely to gain more water illegally. Broken metres at some houses are emptied of their mechanical equipment and, instead, stuffed with wood and steel.

Ahmed Mohammad, a Ramtha resident who declined to give his full name, said he always removes the metre to get water free. He explained that the water flows better without a metre and points out that most of the people in his quarter do the same. Other people said some go as far as using a motor to siphon water in a quicker and better method but at the expense of other residents who get angry and end up breaking their water metre in revenge. Yousef Hajjar, the Water Authority director in Ramtha, says this phenomenon has become very troublesome and has exhausted the financial resources of the directorate. "I wish every person would realise that every piastre spent on replacing a water metre is public money and consequently it is the person himself who pays for the damages" (Al Dustour).

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COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	VALUED BY	CLOSING PRICE
	TRADED	JD	JD
ARAB BANK PLC	360	49460	237.500 236.000
CAIRO ARAB BANK	14900	63474	4.180 4.260
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	5000	2910	1.100 1.100
THE PROGRESSIVE BANK	450	3230	4.780 4.770
JORDAN KUWAIT BANK	1350	2877	2.750 2.710
JORDAN GULF BANK	1900	2071	1.000 1.090
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	1000	3750	3.750 3.750
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	800	2796	3.480 3.490
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	518	2709	3.180 3.100
BETT MIRAL SAVING INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	100	755	1.100 1.000
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1300	1951	1.510 1.510
	55428	197235	INDEX NUMBER: 186.60
			CHANGE : +0.53
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	1300	3682	2.550 2.650
	1400	3682	INDEX NUMBER: 130.44
			CHANGE : +0.47
JORDANIA ELECTRIC POWER	65750	110915	1.580 1.580
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	100	856	2.220 2.220
STATE PORTS AND SECURITY	1460	3294	1.130 1.170
PROSOCO INVESTMENT	1200	1330	0.920 0.920
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	5000	5280	1.060 1.060
UNITED MOBILE EAST & COMMUNICATIONS	3000	6567	2.150 2.150
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1950	6369	3.270 3.280
YAMKA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	3600	4280	1.170 1.190
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	2374	2137	0.930 0.940
	25134	140927	INDEX NUMBER: 124.92
			CHANGE : +0.50
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	7472	26423	3.500 3.550
JORDAN PROSPERITY MINES	2300	6670	2.900 2.900
THE ARAB POLEMI	500	2400	4.100 4.100
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	348	3000	9.200 9.240
THE JORDAN AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL	274	10941	1.360 1.370
THE YOUTH INDUSTRIES	236	1697	7.100 7.200
AXA PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	3050	12674	4.110 4.160
DAR AL DANIA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	1194	8196	6.700 7.000
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	425	2165	5.100 5.100
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	56750	3043	1.550 1.550
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	107750	15150	1.850 1.850
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	1000	8550	1.630 1.600
INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS	5260	5258	.980 1.000
JORDAN ROCKWOOD INDUSTRIES	2000	2000	1.040 1.000
JORDAN SULPHUR-CHEMICALS	9400	11153	1.200 1.180
KATHNER INVESTMENT	500	760	1.500 1.530
UNIVERSAL WOMEN INDUSTRIES	5550	17756	2.950 3.050
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	31200	12780	1.100 1.100
JORDAN PETROLEUM COMPANY	1500	21236	1.420 1.430
EE-ZAY READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.	3750	8016	2.060 2.160
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	28500	38532	1.320 1.350
ONTARIO CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRIAL	73350	112894	1.530 1.540
	327199	481333	INDEX NUMBER: 118.56
			CHANGE : +1.05
GRAND TOTAL	469163	825036	INDEX NUMBER: 152.44
			CHANGE : +10.05
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	155931		
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United miss chance as Newcastle crash

LONDON (AFP) — Second-placed Manchester United missed a golden chance to step up the pressure in the title race after failing to make the most of Premiership leaders Newcastle's second defeat of the season at injury-plagued Chelsea.

While Kevin Keegan's Newcastle were unable to sustain their sparkling early season form at Stamford Bridge, United had looked on course to close the gap at the top to two points when they held a 1-0 half-time lead over Sheffield Wednesday at Old Trafford.

Frenchman Eric Cantona scored his first goal in open play since returning from his lengthy suspension for attacking a fan to put the hosts in front.

But Mark Bright and Guy Whittingham silenced a packed Old Trafford with goals on 59 and 78 minutes to give United's French star a volleyed home from 10 yards to make it 2-2 seven minutes from

time.

United boss Alex Ferguson acknowledged the missed opportunity, saying: "We have missed three glaring chances. It doesn't matter how you are playing, if you miss chances like that you are going to regret them."

Buoyed by an apparent truce in a bitter boardroom battle that has been raging all season Chelsea made the Magpies look second best in an impressive 1-0 victory, which left the Magpies now four points clear at the top of the table.

With chairman Ken Bates and boardroom colleague Matthew Harding cheering the Blues on together from the directors' box after putting their feud behind them in midweek, Glenn Hoddle's men piled on the pressure.

Newcastle lost goalkeeper Shaka Hislop with a thigh injury that will keep him out for two weeks as they prepared to defend a Wise free-kick in the 43rd minute.

And Pavel Srnicek's first

touch was to pick the ball out of his net, after Romanian World Cup full-back Dan Petrescu had chipped the clearance back past him.

Despite an improvement by the visitors in the second-half, Chelsea were full value for the three points.

"In the first half we were very poor, almost a joke. We had so many players not playing well," said Keegan.

"I was very disappointed with them and told them so at half-time. For all the domination in the second-half we never really created much in the way of chances," he added.

Champions Blackburn, 4-1

Champions League winners over Rosenborg of Norway, are still looking for their first away Premiership win of the season after being thrashed 5-0 by struggling Coventry.

Juninho was the inspiration as he dominated play and scored his first goal for Middlesbrough, who ensured

Manchester City's remarkable revival came to an end with a 4-1 defeat at the Riverside Stadium.

Boro's Brazilian idol pounced on 75 minutes after City's German keeper Eike Immel had failed to hold Phil Stamp's shot to complete a great comeback for the hosts.

Georgi Kinkladze, who

manager Alan Ball regards as Georgia's answer to Juninho, had given City a 17th-minute lead after a jinking run, but

Burst's first goal of the season on 40 minutes.

Dion Dublin, with his 10th

goal of the season, David

Rennie, Peter Ndlovu and

John Salako completed the

second-half rout.

To make matters even

worse for Rovers, they lost

midweek hat-trick hero Mike

Newell and inspirational mid-

fielder Ian Bohinen through

injury, both having fallen

badly on the icy pitch.

Juninho was the inspiration

as he dominated play and

scored his first goal for Middlesbrough, who ensured

Manchester City's remarkable

revival came to an end with

a 4-1 defeat at the River-

side Stadium.

Adams could have no

cause for argument, howev-

er, having brought down

Saints.

Striker Neil Shipperley,

who had a clear run on goal.

England striker Teddy

Sheringham's third-minute

goal, his 14th of the season,

was enough to give Tot-

ttenham a 1-0 victory over

struggling QPR at White

Hart Lane. Rangers have

now gone nine games without

Premiership victory.



Paris Saint Germain forward Patrice Loko (left) scores the third goal for his team as Bruno Carotti of Nantes can't stop the ball in their French first division soccer match (Reuters photo)

Spurs sign Robinson to career long contract

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The San Antonio Spurs signed all-star centre David Robinson to a new contract that will keep him with the U.S. National Basketball Association team the rest of his career.

"The Spurs and David Robinson have come to an agreement on a multi-year contract — a new multi-year contract — that allows David Robinson to be a Spur for life," general manager Gregg Popovich said Sunday.

The Spurs would not reveal terms of the agree-

ment, but Popovich said as

long as Robinson plays in the NBA he will be with the Spurs.

Robinson, 30, now in his

seventh NBA season, last

year was the league's most

valuable player award winner.

Robinson is the Spurs'

all-time leader in rebounds

with 5,724, and blocks,

with 1,792. He is second on

the team's all-time total

points list with 12,557, be-

hind only George Gervin.

PSG gain revenge against French champions

Earlier PSG had laid on 20

coaches to enable 3,000 fans

to travel from the outskirts of

Paris despite the 16th day of

strikes which has brought the

French capital to a standstill.

Lens lie in second spot, but

have a chance to claw back to

six points behind the leaders

on their trip to Strasbourg

on Sunday.

Meanwhile Monaco's

Sonny Anderson and Michael

Madaric and Nantes old boy Patrice Loko put

PSG 3-0 up by the break.

And Brazilian Rai hit

another in the first minute

after the interval and Nouma

added to the score on 88

minutes to further demoralise

the Brittany club in front of a

near-capacity 42,000 supporters.

Rohr lie in fourth place.

Three minutes before half-

time, Patrice Loko cele-

brated their third goal after a

long ball by Paul Le Guen

was expertly deflected into

Loko's path by the head of

Valdes.

The Rai converted another

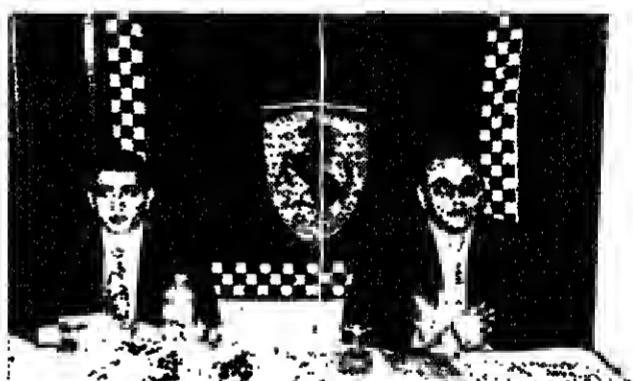
lobbed goal before Nouma,

on for Valdes, completed

Nantes misery two minutes

from time.

Qweider launch Ferrari



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Manager Ziad Qweider said Ferrari company was offering the new Ferrari perfumes at a special rate to be able to compete in the Jordanian market and said every purchase of any of the Ferrari perfumes will entitle the buyer to a free special gift.

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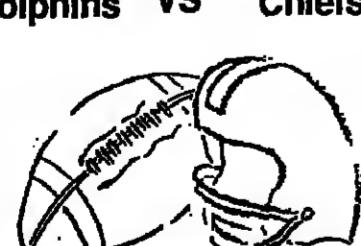
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Sports

Martin faces Ivanisevic in Grand Slam Cup final

MUNICH (AFP) — American Todd Martin caused a sensation and disappointed the home crowd as he ousted Germany's Boris Becker 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) to set up a final against Goran Ivanisevic in the six-million-dollar Grand Slam Cup here on Saturday.

Fourth seeded Martin, who knocked out the overwhelming favourites after the withdrawal of world number one Pete Sampras, now plays either Croatia's 10th world-ranked Goran Ivanisevic.

Ivanisevic ousted Russia Kafelnikov 7-6 (9/7), 4-6, 6-3, 5-4 to give himself a chance of the \$1.625 million top prize on Sunday. Ivanisevic ained down 41 aces during the match.

Despite having the crowd against him, Martin triumphed with his consistency, good returns of serve and an ability to mix his shots.

Becker, meanwhile, was unsettled and lacked sharpness in this last event of the season, and combined brilliant shots with terrible errors.

Becker hit 17 aces but had just a 38 per cent success with his first serve compared with Martin's 23 aces on a fast surface where good serving was vital. The three-times Wimbledon champion also made 14 double faults.

However, Becker made a promising start, with Martin unable to break his serve in the first set. But at 3-4 down in the second, Becker lost his serve after netting two easy forehand volleys and Martin went on to level at one set all.

Martin won the third set against a tiring Becker, who



Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic points to supporters after winning the semi-final match against Yevgeny Kafelnikov at Munich's Grand Slam Cup Tournament (Reuters photo)

appeared irritated by umpiring decisions, the crowd and his own game.

Drama increased in the fourth set at 4-4, with both players on one break apiece and Becker forced to save four break points.

"I'm building a house. I'll find some other ways to get rid of it and hopefully find some charities and stuff like that, I certainly don't need it all."

Becker acknowledged: "He played top class tennis in this match. I was not consistent enough."

"I got problems in timing my serve, made a few double faults that I didn't have to do. There was no weak period in his play."

"Today, anyway," I couldn't play any better."

Malone nets 51 for Utah Jazz

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Karl Malone scored 51 points Saturday as the Utah Jazz overcame the Golden State Warriors 123-109.

Malone matched the 51 points scored by Denver's Mahmoud Abdul Rauf two days earlier in the same building as he shot 19-of-28 from the field and 13-of-16 from the foul line.

"I don't keep track of things during the game," said Malone, who also had 14 rebounds. "My teammates were, though."

"(Jeff) Hornacek came up to me and said, 'Hey, how many you got?' He looked up and said, 'let's get 50.' But I don't try to rub it in. We just needed it at the time."

It was Malone's best scoring performance since his career high of 61 points against Milwaukee on January 27, 1990.

Malone scored 19 of the Jazz from a 74-58 deficit into an 85-85 tie.

John Stockton, who had 11 pointer surge that helped Utah put the game away.

Stockton, listed as doubtful before the game, rebounded from a sprained left ankle and made his 46th straight start, the longest current streak in the NBA.

In Atlanta, Patrick Ewing scored 14 of his 29 points in a 20-1 burst in the fourth quarter and the New York Knicks allowed just one basket in the final nine minutes of a 101-92 victory over the slumping Atlanta Hawks.

John Starks added 20 points for the Knicks, who have won four of their last five and improved to 8-3 on the road. Steve Smith scored 29 points for the Hawks, losers of five in a row.

In Seattle, Detlef Schrempf scored 28 points and Shawn Kemp added 25 as the Seattle SuperSonics defeated the Portland Trail Blazers 106-97 for their fourth

straight win. Kemp added 13 rebounds and Gary Payton had 13 points, 12 assists, seven rebounds and three steals for Seattle, which moved into a first-place tie with the Sacramento Kings in the Pacific Division.

In Cleveland, Chris Childs scored 14 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter when the New Jersey Nets held the Cavaliers to just nine points to rally for an 85-73 win over Cleveland.

The Nets outscored Cleveland 27-9 over the final 13:30 to win for the fifth time in six games. Danny Ferry scored 18 points for the Cavs, who shot 3-of-15 in the final period.

In Milwaukee, Michael Jordan scored 13 of his 45 points in the fourth quarter and Scottie Pippen scored six in a key fourth-quarter run as the Chicago Bulls defeated the Milwaukee Bucks 118-106 for their sixth straight win.

Dennis Rodman grabbed 21 rebounds for Chicago, which improved the league's best record to 16-2.

Glenn Robinson had 39 points and 12 boards for the Bucks.

After Robinson dunked to tie the game at 90-90 with 10:21 left in the fourth quarter, Jordan hit a pair of free throws to ignite a 13-4 run. Pippen, who had 28 points, scored the next six points on consecutive jumpers and a layup.

In Charlotte, Larry Johnson scored seven of his game-high 35 points during a pivot-



Charlotte Hornets guard Kendall Gill (left) blocks a shot by Miami Heat centre Alonzo Mourning (centre), as Mourning attempts to shoot over Hornets centre George Zidek during second quarter action at the Miami Arena (Reuters photo)

that pulled Charlotte back into the game. Johnson also led the Hornets with 11 rebounds.

Christian Laettner led the Timberwolves with 20 points. In Dallas, Robert Pack scored 25 points and Calbert Cheaney added 22 to lead the Washington Bullets to a 103-94 victory over the reeling Dallas Mavericks.

After starting the season 4-0, the Mavericks have won just two of their last 14 games.

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EAST

4 7 4

Q Q 10 8 5

Q K 6

+ K J a g a

SOUTH
♦ A Q J
Q A 7 2
Q Q 10 8 3 2
A 4 4

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2s Pass 2NT Pass

INT Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Four of ♦

When the opponents are trying to help you without realizing it, you should do everything in your power to encourage them. Failure to "seize the day" cost declarer dearly on this hand.

North-South were employing a 16-18 range for one-on-one trump opening bids. North probed for a 4-4 major fit and, when none was located, invited game with two no trump bids. Holding 17 points and a five-card suit, South's acceptance was automatic.

West led the four of diamonds,

and East applied the Rule of Eleven to work out that declarer held three cards higher than the one led. When South followed with the deuce under East's king, the declarer decided that diamonds offered no future and shifted to a club.

That finished off declarer's chances. South could count nine tricks without the diamond suit, and as soon as the defenders were given the chance to win the ace of diamonds they cashed out the club for a two-trick set.

Given the auction, we would not have selected a diamond as our opening bid, but we could have chosen that might be declarer's suit. Our choice would have been a high spade. Having received a reprieve, declarer failed to make the most of it.

Declarer should have encouraged the declarer to continue in diamonds. The way to accomplish that was to falsecard with the eight of diamonds, suggesting that the lead might have been from a six-card suit, perhaps even headed by the ace-queen. East would surely then have returned a spade.

The rule of twain is simple enough. As declarer, play your cards exactly as a defender would — a high card to encourage continuation, a low card to suggest a shift.

HOTEL INTER-CONTINENTAL JORDAN
Jeanne's Honey Tree Dec 1st-31st Christmas starts early at **MAMA MAMITA** MEXICAN BAR AND RESTAURANT

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EGERIE by GIVENCHY

Givenchy new set for the 1995-96 fall-winter season makeup

Givenchy company presents the world renowned beauty expert Mr. Francois Dif who will work to show the hidden attractions of every woman by using the warm colours of winter.

Mr. Dif is happy to offer his advice on the new Swisscare products while in Amman in the period Dec. 9-18. his schedule will be as follows:

Astra Showroom / Gardens St.	(Saturday) 9/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Astra Showroom / Gardens St.	(Sunday) 10/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Halley Pharmacy / Jaber Center	(Monday) 11/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Samah Perfumery / Housing Bank Center	(Tuesday) 12/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Al Alar Showroom / Down Town	(Wednesday) 13/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Astra Showroom / Gardens St.	(Thursday) 14/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Sobar Pharmacy / Shmeisani	(Saturday) 16/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Astra Showroom / Gardens St.	(Sunday) 17/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00
Astra Showroom / Gardens St.	(Monday) 18/12/1995	10:30 - 1:00 & 4:00 - 7:00

ASTRA SHOWROOM
Wasfi Tell (Gardens) Street, Bahjat Gardens Complex, Tel. 602677.

مؤسسة استر للوكالات التجارية
هاتف: ٠١٢٤٣٨٢٤٣

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PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD	AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
Tel: 634144	TEL: 699238	TEL: 677420	TEL: 618274 - 618275	TEL: 625155
Kevin Costner in WATERWORLD Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh in A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh ..in A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Sylvester Stallone..in ASSASSINS Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15	Hi Citizen daily at 8:30 p.m. Written & directed by Mohammad Shawaqfeh Shows begin on Dec. 19, 1995 and continue on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (three days a week) only. The programme continues until the start of the holy month of Ramadan. The Show is entitled: "Ahlan Tatbie"	Welcome Normalisation For reservation call 625155

PNA, Hamas aim for Cairo talks this week'

GAZA (Agencies) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and its rival the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas are aiming for long-mooted reconciliation talks in Egypt next week, officials on both sides said on Sunday.

PNA officials said on Saturday Egypt had offered to hold the dialogue between Hamas and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Sunday but Hamas did not reply, saying it had not received a formal invitation.

Officials on both sides say privately that a dispute between Hamas's leadership in exile, which insists on a hard line against the PLO-Israel peace deal, and some local leaders, whose stance has softened, had blocked the Egypt meeting so far.

Hamas opposes the 1993 deal providing self-rule and elections in Gaza and the West Bank. Its militants have killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings. The attacks slowed in recent months as PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat stepped up contacts to turn Hamas from violent to political opposition.

Hamas also admits it has been dealt a heavy blow by arrest campaigns ordered by Mr. Arafat after its attacks on Israelis.

PLO officials said Hamas locally now proposed sending an 11-member team to Egypt on Wednesday to hold talks with its exiled leadership prior to a meeting with Mr. Arafat next week.

But local Hamas officials

conditioned any meeting on release of one of their leaders, Abu Musamah, jailed this year by PNA military court for two years for incitement.

Mahmoud Al Zahar, a Hamas leader in Gaza, told Reuters: "The meeting with the leadership outside will take two days, maximum two days, so if Sheikh Abu Musamah is released, the meeting with the PLO will take place next week."

An Arafat aide, who spoke on condition he not be named, said: "President Arafat wants Hamas to respect the peace agreements he signed with Israel, and this means refraining from carrying out attacks against Israel."

"The president is studying Abu Musamah's release so he can take part in reconciliation talks in Egypt," the aide said.

While Hamas is still officially opposed to Jan. 20 Palestinian elections to be held under the PLO-Israel accord, there are signs it is hedging its bets. A political party which is a Hamas offshoot has been formed.

On Saturday, leading members of the new party, the national Islamic Salvation Party (NISP), met Mr. Arafat and received his permission to issue a newspaper expressing the party's views.

In parallel, Imaad Al Falouji, editor and publisher of Al Watan, another newspaper affiliated with Hamas, announced he was closing Al Watan. He gave no reason.

Mr. Arafat on Saturday

delayed for four days until Dec. 14 candidate registration in hopes Hamas would join the process. The NISP has yet to put up a candidate.

In Damascus, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) has called for a boycott of the Palestinian elections, the official Syrian news agency SANA said.

The leader of the group, Nayef Hawatmeh, said, "these elections are neither free nor democratic," and called for a referendum to discover the Palestinian people's view of the autonomy accords struck with Israel.

Another Syrian-based group opposed to autonomy, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, announced Thursday that it would boycott the elections.

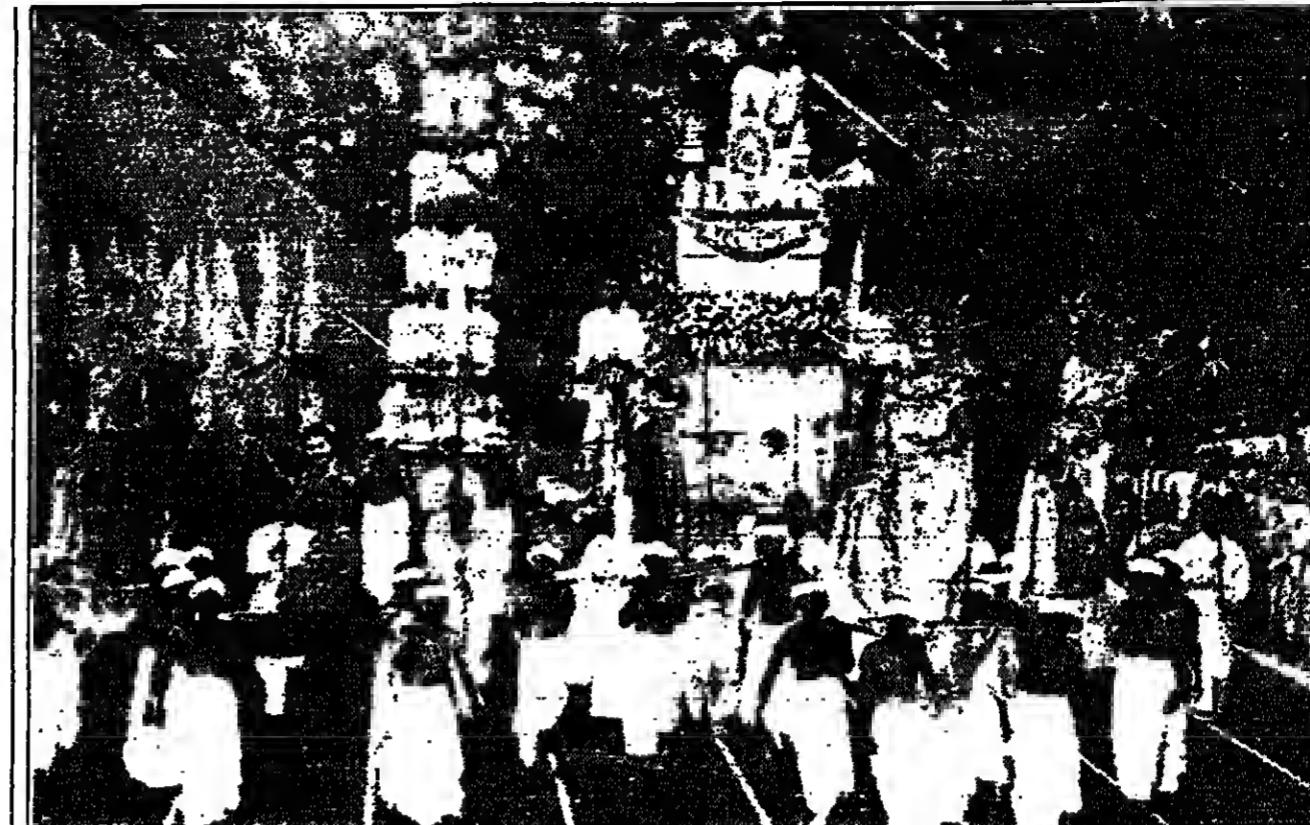
Farouk Kaddoumi, the head of the PLO's Political Department, said Sunday the elections would not produce a legitimate authority because they were taking place under Israeli occupation.

"The organisation of the elections before the reconstruction of Palestinian society is a leap into the void, because the Israeli occupation is still in place and most of the Palestinian people will not take part in the vote," Mr. Kaddoumi said, quoted by the Arab daily Al Hayat on Sunday.

That's why the legitimacy of the council will be fragile and it will only be able to impose its authority through repressive and violent measures," the Tunis-based leader added.

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Mr. Arafat on Saturday



THAI TRADITION: Thai women wearing colourful traditional costumes from different tribes are paraded during the opening ceremonies on Saturday of the 18th Southeast Asian Games at Chiang Mai stadium in Thailand (AFP photo)

Rotblat receives Nobel Peace Prize, renews call for nuclear-free world

OSLO (AFP) — British scientist Joseph Rotblat and the anti-nuclear Pugwash movement he heads were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize at a ceremony in the Norwegian capital Sunday.

Mr. Rotblat, 87, was visibly moved as he stepped up to receive the award in the televised ceremony in front of some 1,000 invited guests including King Harald V and Queen Sonja of Norway.

Afterwards he called in his acceptance speech for a world free of nuclear weapons and war and accused the major powers of failing to honour pledges on disarmament.

Receiving the prize on behalf of the Pugwash movement was Secretary-General Francesco Cicali. Mr. Rotblat has headed the organisation, founded in a Canadian fishing village of the same name in 1957, since 1988.

Mr. Rotblat has said he will donate his share of the annual peace prize, worth 7.2 million Swedish kronor (\$1.1 million), to Pugwash.

mantled in a little over 10 years from now."

The movement is dedicated to making scientists more aware of the destructive powers of their inventions, and it has played a key role in several disarmament accords.

Earlier the co-laureates had an audience with the Norwegian king and queen and were due later Sunday to speak on the U.S. cable television channel CNN.

In his speech, Mr. Rotblat said that present nuclear thinking was "a recipe for proliferation" and "a policy out of date thinking."

He also called on his fellow scientists to refrain from working on nuclear weapons projects.

"It should be the duty of scientists to expose such malfeasance ... This may bring reprisals; a price to be paid for one's convictions. The price may be very heavy," he added.

Turning to the people of the world, he asked: "Help us to establish lasting peace."

"A nuclear-free world would be safer than the present one but the danger of the ultimate catastrophe would still be there. The only way to prevent this is to abolish war altogether."

He denied the search for a world free of war was "a Utopian dream," arguing that there already exist areas of the globe — the European Union, for example — where armed conflict was "inconceivable."

He said the 18-year prison sentence for Israeli scientist Mordechai Vanunu, jailed in 1988 after revealing secrets of Israel's nuclear programme, had been "disproportionately

severe."

"The purpose of some government or industrial research is sometimes concealed, and misleading information is presented to the public.

"We have the technical means to create a nuclear-free world in about a decade. Alas, the present programme does not provide for this," he added.

Public declarations of commitment to an indefinite extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty were not matched by deeds, he said, urging nations to "abandon out of date thinking."

He also called on his fellow scientists to refrain from working on nuclear weapons projects.

"If all scientists heeded this call there would be no more nuclear warheads, no French scientists at Mururoa (the French nuclear testing site in the South Pacific), no new chemical and biological poisons."

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